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TRANSITION AND INEQUALITY:
FEMALE STUDENTS AT
APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY, 1939-89

A Thesis

by

LISA ALANNA MCGURK

Submitted to the Graduate School

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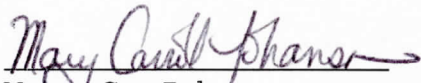
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Lisa Alanna McGurk

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ABSTRACT

TRANSITION AND INEQUALITY:

FEMALE STUDENTS AT

APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY, 1939-89. (August 1998)

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Despite ASU's historically conservative student population due to its relatively isolated location, female students at Appalachian experienced many changes during the years 1939 to 1989. The Second World War engendered many changes for women at Appalachian State Teachers College (ASTC). Because of its status as a teacher's college, ASTC has usually had more female students than male students. The war exaggerated this ratio. This opened up more opportunities for women to take leadership roles on campus. This was just for the duration, however; after the war the men returned to resume campus leadership as they did at colleges across the country. During the 1950s, there was an emphasis on domesticity and the child-rearing role of women. The students demanded and received a loosening of the strict rules that they had to follow during the post-war years.

Female students at Appalachian State University

followed national patterns in their struggle to gain more rights. The women's rights movement at Appalachian State University began in the 1960s, grew in the 1970s, and experienced a backlash in the 1980s. Female students at Appalachian State Teachers College in the 1960s benefitted from the revolt against *in loco parentis*, or the role of the university as surrogate parent. Like students at other schools, they demanded and received more rights, especially in regard to dorm rules. Female students in the 1970s organized to fight for women's rights and continued to fight into the 1980s. For example, they fought for women's studies and daycare. Also in the 1980s, however, there was a backlash against the women's rights movement in which both male and female students took part. This also reflected a national trend. The women's movement was blamed for many societal ills such as divorce and single parenthood. Feminists in the 1990s are still fighting against this negative image of the women's movement.

An important debate among feminist scholars is the view of women as oppressed versus the view of women as active agents. Female students at ASU were both oppressed by male-defined society and were also active agents in the struggle of students to gain more rights.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The historian Gerda Lerner, in her essay "Placing Women in History," described several levels of women's history. The first level, "compensatory history," was where historians wrote about "notable women." It did not tell about the significance of women's activities to society. The next level was "contribution history" which described women's oppression by male-defined society. The contributions that women made such as participating in reform movements were "judged first of all with respect to its effect on that movement and secondly by standards appropriate to men."¹ For example, Margaret Sanger was known as the founder of the birth control movement, not as a woman who challenged the domination of women's bodies by the male-dominated society.

"Contribution history" failed to bring out the positive and important contributions of women to history. "Mary Beard was the first to point out that the ongoing and continuing contribution of women to the development of human

¹Gerda Lerner, "Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challeges," *Feminist Studies* III (Fall 1975): 2.

culture cannot be found by treating them only as victims of oppression."¹ Contribution history should not be the central concern of women's history because it places women in a male-defined conceptual framework. Women's history needs to describe women functioning in the male-defined world "on their own terms."² Historians need to understand that women's history is the history of the majority of humankind. In this thesis there will be an attempt to avoid both "compensatory history" and "contribution history." Appalachian State University women will not be placed in a male-defined conceptual framework, but will instead be described as functioning at ASU "on their own terms."³ Despite the fact that females at ASU were oppressed, they made up the majority of the student body for most of Appalachian's history.

Appalachian State University provides an important case study in the history of the struggles of female college students to gain more freedoms. Appalachian State University was typical in its treatment of female students, especially when compared to other southern schools. Up until the 1960s and 1970s, this treatment reflected the patriarchy of the

¹Lerner, "Placing Women in History," 3.

²Lerner, "Placing Women in History," 3.

³Lerner, "Placing Women in History," 3.

South. The patriarchy of the South was "established during the colonial era, reinforced during the antebellum era, and eroded but not eradicated by the Civil War and Reconstruction [and has]...survived into the twentieth century."¹ Patriarchal societies were characterized by male dominance. As in "traditional" families, the father or eldest male had complete control over other members of the group. Women were to obey first their fathers and then their husbands. If they went off to college, the college became their surrogate father.

The tradition of *in loco parentis*, or the view of college as substitute parent, began at Appalachian State University with the founding of the school. *In loco parentis* was common for both male and female students at American colleges and universities up until the 1960s. Blanford Barnard Dougherty (B.B.) and his brother Dauphin Disco (D.D.) Dougherty founded Watauga Academy in 1899. B.B. Dougherty also became superintendent of Watauga County Schools and faced the problem of poorly-paid and -trained teachers. Many teachers could not afford the tuition to go to school. Dougherty turned to the state legislature for help, and on March 9, 1903, the North Carolina legislature

¹Margaret Ripley Wolfe, *Daughters of Canaan* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 2-3.

passed the Newland Bill establishing Appalachian Training School. Tuition was free to those who promised to teach in North Carolina for two years.¹

Education was gaining in prominence nationally. "The movement of education to the core of the American experience, already discernible during the nineteenth century, accelerated during the twentieth."² The American public perceived education as a significant undertaking; it was important for a democracy to have educated citizens. The Dougherty brothers were not the only ones to see the importance of education.

From the beginning, the Dougherty brothers imposed strict rules upon the students, regulating every aspect of their lives. Appalachian had a religious emphasis; there were weekly prayer meetings in the dorms and church attendance was required. "Students at the Training School found Dougherty to be very strict, especially with regard to boy and girl relations, but the rigid rules were concordant with the accepted and correct behavior of the times."³ The

¹Ruby J. Lanier, *Blanford Barnard Dougherty: Mountain Educator* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1974), 66.

²Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1988), 12.

³Lanier, *Blanford Barnard Dougherty*, 67.

students were fined if they were found talking to the opposite sex.

Female students at East Carolina Teachers Training School also had strict rules that they were to follow.¹ Mrs. Kate Beckwith, the lady principal from 1909 to 1925, was "charged with guarding their morals and well-being, she was also expected to imbue them with the social graces and maidenly decorum appropriate for a southern lady in the role of a professional woman."² Mrs. Beckwith insisted that the female students wear hats and gloves in town, prohibited them from strolling on the campus boardwalk when male students were in the area, and was horrified if a female student called to a male from her dormitory window. Like at Appalachian, female students consistently outnumbered male students at East Carolina.

Students at Western Carolina³ also had to follow strict rules. All female students had to board in the dormitories

¹East Carolina University was chosen for comparison because it is also a North Carolina university that started out as a teacher training facility.

²Mary Jo Jackson Bratton, *East Carolina University: The Formative Year, 1907-1982* (Greenville: East Carolina University Alumni Association, 1986), 121.

³Western Carolina was chosen for comparison because it shares many characteristics with Appalachian, it is located in the North Carolina mountains and started as a teacher training school.

and students staying in the dormitories were required to attend church each Sunday. They were allowed weekend visits to friends twice a quarter. Like at Appalachian, Western Carolina's administration required chapel attendance.

Western female students were not allowed to make any side trips on their way home without consent from their parents. In 1927 three female students were charged with forging letters from home that contained parental permission to be off-campus one weekend. They were seen in the company of men at a movie theater, not at the place they said they would be. They were charged with forging letters, having plans to meet boys, riding in a car with boys, and going to a different place than where they stated they would be. Two of them were expelled and one was placed on campus restriction.¹

The ATC teachers also had rules that they were to follow. The school began with six teachers: D.D. Dougherty, Principal, Mathematics and Science; B.B. Dougherty, Superintendent, Latin and Pedagogics; W.M. Francum, History and Geography; Maude Harris, English and French; Julia Hardin, Primary Department; and Margaret B. Rhea, Music and

¹Carol Lorraine Bellamy, "Student Life at Cullowhee: The Hunter Years, 1923-1947" (MA thesis, Western Carolina University, 1979), 17.

Art.¹ Examples of some of the rules for female teachers during the early 1900s included:

You will not marry during the term of your contract. You are not to keep company of men. You must be home between the hours of 8 P.M. and 6 A.M. unless attending a school function. You may not ride in a carriage or automobile with any man unless he is your father or brother. You may not dress in bright colors. Your dresses must not be any shorter than two inches above the ankle.²

These strict rules on female teachers were designed to maintain high moral standards; they were to model good moral behavior to their students.

In 1921, the North Carolina Legislature authorized that ATC become a normal school and in 1925 ATC's central purpose became that of training teachers. B.B. Dougherty expected that everyone associated with Appalachian State Normal School would maintain high ideals.

At a faculty meeting, Dougherty had implied that 'all were expected to cultivate a high moral tone and respect in all relations with each other.' He said that 'all swearing, black-guarding, and gossiping of everyone on the campus,' whether among teachers, students, or workers, should be eliminated

¹Cratis D. Williams, "A Short History of Appalachian", in *Leaders of the Appalachian Alumni Family*, ed. by Richard D. Howe (Boone: Appalachian State University, 1986): B-2.

²"(1915) Rules for Teachers," Dougherty Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

from every conversation.¹

In 1929, the name changed again to Appalachian State Teachers College and it became a four-year college. Appalachian continued to grow and students had strict rules imposed upon them throughout the 1920s and 1930s. These strict rules were explained in part by the fact that ASTC's primary purpose was training teachers. In order to get a job in many school systems the graduates had to have impeccable moral characters. The female students had stricter rules to follow than men: female teachers accompanied them when they left their dorms; they were not allowed to ride in automobiles except when riding to and from home; and they could not stand next to cars for extended conversation.

Some student protests against the strict social rules occurred during the 1930s. In March 1932, the students held a mass meeting to protest these rules. They wanted a joint discussion with the faculty of their grievances. In 1935, male students ignored the rules at a basketball game and sat with the females. Some male students later clashed with police when they went to the girls' dorms. Students went out on strike the next day to protest the treatment that the students received. Dougherty offered some concessions to

¹Lanier, *Blanford Barnard Dougherty*, 98.

the students: a student committee would be set up; all students would be able to attend classes the next day without the fear of punishment; and the students and faculty were to build school spirit. In other words, nothing really changed much for the students.

B.B. Dougherty was head of Appalachian until his retirement in 1955. Dr. William H. Plemmons became president in 1955 and stayed until 1969. Under his administration Appalachian experienced phenomenal growth; ASTC constructed twenty-four new buildings and enrollment grew to nearly 5000 students. In 1969, Dr. Herbert Wey became president and then chancellor of the university. Growth also marked his administration, and he emphasized innovative educational techniques during his administration in the 1970s. Dr. John Thomas was chancellor from 1979 to 1993.

Appalachian historically has had a rather conservative student body due to its location in the Appalachian mountains. The student body was homogenous, mostly white and Protestant. ASU still has difficulty attracting minority students and faculty due to the lack of amenities for minorities in the area. Despite the conservative leanings of the student body, female students at Appalachian experienced changes during the years 1939 to 1989. They

participated along with the male students in a struggle to gain more rights.

Chapter Two

Increasing Opportunities

The Second World War brought changes for women at Appalachian State Teachers College. With the departure of the majority of men from campus, opportunities for women opened, such as participating in student government. The college also revised student rules in the early 1940s. However, there was no movement to fundamentally change the role of women. As was the case nationally, most opportunities that opened up for ASTC females were just for the duration of the war. The traditional gender roles remained firmly entrenched at ASTC and throughout American society.

The historian Geoffrey Perrett argued that during the war there was an advancement of conservative interests because of the perceived need to keep society stable during the war. The "revival of conservatism taught America once again the conservative way in thought, speech and deed of how to exalt the state abroad and limit it at home."¹ It would be less likely for changes to occur for women in a

¹Geoffrey Perrett, *Days of Sadness, Years of Triumph: The American People 1939-1945* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan Inc., 1973), 287.

conservative atmosphere.

Historians Margaret R. Higonnet and Patrice L.-R. Higonnet used the concept of the double helix to help explain why the changes for women during the war were not permanent. The double helix has two intertwined strands, the female strand is opposed to the male strand and is subordinate to the male strand.

War alters the vocabulary of feminine dependence (as it moves women from the 'home' to the 'homefront'), and it may even improve the lives of some working women. In the long run, however, the dynamic of gender subordination remains as it was. After the war, the lines of gender can therefore be redrawn to conform to the prewar map of relations between men's and women's roles.¹

The tasks that women were assigned were still seen as less important than male tasks. At ASTC this meant, for example, that even though there were female student body presidents, the ASTC community did not value their positions as much as the later male presidents' positions.

Western Carolina also experienced a decrease in male enrollment; male students comprised less than ten percent of

¹Margaret R. Higonnet and Patrice L.-R. Higonnet, "The Double Helix," in Margaret R. Higonnet et al, eds., *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 34.

the student body during the war years.¹ In 1942 female students were elected as president and vice-president of the student body. Female students also became editors of the school newspaper.

Some ASTC students discussed the increased opportunities for women during the war, as in an April 1942 editorial in the school newspaper:

Looking from a brighter angle one can see what is perhaps the final step in the 'emancipation' of the women. The nineteenth amendment appeared directly after the World War largely because the nation realized the value of the women's war effort. Now with our college women stepping into every branch of the professions and business (almost entirely taking over the teaching profession) we can expect other great developments. The tangible and intangible barriers which have held women down for so long now show signs of weakening. Perhaps this is one of the silver linings of the dark cloud that hovers over our horizon.²

This editorial implied that some students at ASTC were familiar with the women's rights movement. Unfortunately, the "emancipation" of women that they foresaw did not come about until two to three decades after the end of World War II. According to William H. Chafe, the optimism expressed in this editorial was misplaced, the barriers to women were still there. "The absence of greater progress in the areas

¹Bellamy, "Student Life at Cullowhee," 86.

²"Where From Here?", *The Appalachian* 17 April 1942, 2.

of equal pay, job segregation, community services, and recognition of women leaders raised profound doubts about the war's permanent impact on underlying attitudes toward woman's place."¹

Discussions of women's rights were going on across the country. Writing in 1946, women's historian Mary R. Beard argued that women had been a force throughout history, not just a subject sex. In fact, women played an important role in World War II. "With the rise of the Axis Powers in Europe, and especially after the outbreak of war seemed imminent in Europe, American women began to manifest their will to influence the shaping of American foreign policy."² Women agitated for the enactment of bills that supported the war effort. Women also enlisted in the service.

A January 1943 edition of the ASTC paper advertised the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC). The advertisement discussed the importance of the WAAC and tried to appeal to the adventurous side of the female students: "New horizons...new places and people...interesting, practical experience with good pay...and, above all, a real

¹William Henry Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 152.

²Mary Ritter Beard, *Women as Force in History* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), 12.

opportunity to help your country by doing essential military work for the U.S. Army that frees a soldier for combat duty."¹

The fact that the female service members would free up men for combat duty supports a statement that William H. Chafe made about the government's appeals to women during World War II. The U.S. government used conventional stereotypes to rationalize the shifts in women's roles during the war. According to Chafe, "whether the stereotype involved was the physical or emotional, reliance on such traditional images said a great deal about the difficulty of changing fundamental assumptions about sex roles."² This partly explains why women's gains during the war were temporary; society saw their contributions as falling within the women's sphere of activity. "Wartime propaganda imagery of 'women's place' on the nation's production lines consistently portrayed women's war work as a temporary extension of domesticity."³

Female students at ASTC did discuss what they could do

¹"To College Women in Their Senior Year," *The Appalachian* 15 January 1943, 3.

²Chafe, *The Paradox of Change*, 124.

³Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work: The Dynamics of Job Segregation by Sex During World War II* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 50.

to help the war effort but their discussion stayed within the boundaries of women's sphere as it was perceived at that time. In January 1942, members of the Women's Dormitory Assembly met "for the purpose of discussing the role the co-ed can play in national defense."¹ They discussed conserving energy and saving time. They worked out a study program so that the students could maximize their time and thus devote more time to the war effort. For the female students and others on the homefront, this meant working to support the male soldiers who were actually fighting the war. For example, they did such things as joining in bond drives, giving blood, and collecting scrap metal.

Female students at ASTC did have an opportunity to participate in "non-traditional" roles during the war, and even just prior to it. Because of ASTC's status as a teacher's college, there had traditionally been more female students than male students. In the 1940-41 school year, the first student body president who was nominated from the rising senior class and voted on in a campus-wide election was a female, Catherine Morris. She received 397 out of 732 votes; her opponent, Bill Robertson, received 335 votes. According to the student newspaper: "Morris has during the

¹"Women's Assembly Discusses Defense," *The Appalachian* 1 January 1942, 1.

past year been a member of the Student Council and was one of the committee chosen to construct the recently adopted constitution."¹ Women were to hold the post of president throughout the war years. The question arises as to how much real power the student body presidents had at this time period. This was when *in loco parentis* was in effect, and the male-led administration controlled many aspects of the students' lives. The students were not to seriously challenge *in loco parentis* until the 1960s.

The new constitution adopted in the early 1940s was an important development in the students having a voice at Appalachian. For the first time students could give formal input to the administration on the rules that governed them. Article II of the constitution stated: "The purpose of the Student Council is to provide for a definite organization in which the students of Appalachian may participate actively, responsibly, and officially in the government of Appalachian."² The students could participate in the enforcement of the rules but not challenge them. The constitution also set up Men's and Women's Dormitory Assemblies which were to handle problems pertaining to the

¹"Morris Selected Over Robertson for New Office," *The Appalachian* 5 April 1940, 1.

²"Constitution of the Student-Faculty Government Association of A.S.T.C.," *The Appalachian* 8 March 1940, 1.

dorms, problems that had to do with the breaking of the strict rules that students had to follow. Even though the Constitution gave students a voice in governance, the administration still had the most power in the governing of the students.

Student handbooks show that Appalachian students had every aspect of their lives regulated by the school up until the 1960s. In the 1941-42 handbook: "When general or special meetings come to a close, the young men will retire to their part of the campus- young women do not attend them on the way. Young women attend only those athletic games that are announced at the chapel."¹ Until the early 1970s, Kraut Creek divided the campus into the men's side and the women's side. The students got into trouble if they were caught on the wrong side of the creek after curfew.

The 1941-42 handbook also stated that no female student could spend the night out of her dormitory. The students had to report to the matrons of the dormitories before they left campus. All students were expected to go to their rooms when the whistle blew after supper. The dorm mothers inspected the students' rooms for cleanliness and neatness. The rules also regulated students' actions away from the

¹*ASTC Student Handbook* (Boone: Appalachian State Teachers College, 1941-42): 44.

dorms. "All students when going away from the dormitory on permission or at the close of the terms, or when returning to the dormitory, will go directly from and return directly to the dormitory, not stopping in town."¹

Many of these strict rules applied to both male and female students, although males did have more freedom than females. Females had more restricted dorm hours and rules. This reflects the view of the "southern lady" as discussed by the historians Anne Firor Scott and Margaret Ripley Wolfe. The "southern lady" was to be protected and controlled. Scott described the image of the ideal "southern lady" as submissive, physically weak, timid, modest, and graceful.² If a southern woman deviated from expected norms, it reflected badly on her male relatives.³ The rule that female students could not spend the night out of their dorms was for their own protection, but it also protected their guardians, their parents, and the college. They could not have physical harm come to them nor have their reputations ruined if they were safe in the dorms, nor

¹*ASTC Student Handbook* (Boone: Appalachian State Teachers College, 1941-42): 46.

²Anne Firor Scott, *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics* (Charlottesville: University of Press Virginia, 1970), 4.

³Wolfe, *Daughters of Canaan*, 4.

could the college's reputation be damaged.

The administration building's rules stated that students were not to linger between classes. They were not to "assemble on stairways, on the porch, in the halls, or in front of the Administration Building, or to spend time in social activities; but each student is expected to adjust and use the periods when not on recitation for additional study."¹ Again these rules reflect *in loco parentis*; the students were not given the opportunity to engage in mischief.

There were even rules on dating; the formal dating program was originated by the Student Council in 1938. The following were the rules for dating:

1. Senior girls may date as often as they wish.
2. Junior girls may date three nights per week.
3. Sophomore girls may date twice per week.
4. Freshmen girls may date once each week.
5. This applies to the girls rooming in the dormitories.
6. All dating is carried on in the dormitory living rooms. Students do not date on nights when there is a program sponsored elsewhere on the campus. Dates begin at 8:00 and end at 10:00.²

This actually signified a loosening of administrative

¹ASTC Student Handbook (Boone: Appalachian State Teachers College, 1941-42): 47.

²ASTC Student Handbook (Boone: Appalachian State Teachers College, 1941-42): 51.

policies; students went from having no control over the dating policy to actually making their own rules. Of course, the administration would not have tolerated rules that were too permissive.

The fact that the student council supervised these rules raises an interesting question. If the students were complicit in these strict rules, why did they not try to change them earlier? The answer might lie in the fact that the male students in the student council saw the need to protect and control the females, to perpetuate male power over females. But why did the female students go along with these rules for so long? They might have also had an interest in keeping the status quo. The rules kept their reputations safe so that they could eventually find good husbands, which was the goal of many female students during this time period. There is also a psychological reason for women's role in their own subordination. "Women have for millennia participated in the process of their own subordination because they have been psychologically shaped so as to internalize the idea of their own inferiority."¹ Therefore they would not have questioned their inferior status in society, even though they were being educated

¹Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 218.

alongside males. Most females were raised with different expectations from their male counterparts as to what they were to do with their lives, and how they were to behave.

The writings of Cratis Williams, who later became dean of the graduate school, shed some light on the question of whether the students followed these strict rules. Williams began working at Appalachian in 1942. In his memoirs he described a walk along Howard's Knob (a mountain near the campus and a popular spot for views of Boone) and what he discovered there.

Beyond the end of the trail I ran into surprises. Behind nearly every tree and rock was a young couple. Some were standing, some sitting, and some reclining. They were college students who had slipped away from campus. 'Boys' over one entrance to the administration building and 'girls' the other, segregated seating in the auditorium, an eight o'clock curfew in the evening and other precautions did not prevent courting couples from coming together when they set their heads to do so.¹

Some protests against the repressive rules, however, occurred during the war years. On January 17, 1943, a group of students assembled in front of the Administration Building and elected a committee to present a list of grievances to the administration. The list of grievances was:

¹Cratis Williams, *The Cratis Williams Memoirs: I Come to Boone* (Boone: Appalachian Consortium, in press), 129.

(1) The ban on social activities such as dancing and bridge. Social functions, such as these, are an integral part of community life. That teachers should be prepared to actively participate in functions of this nature. (2) Students have insufficient voice in formulating the policies in regard to dormitory regulations. (3) The Library closes too early in the evening. (4) The human behavior system is unpopular on the campus, because: a. In many cases the reasons for the grades given are not known. b. Students have no satisfactory method of redress.¹

The human behavior system had been begun by Dougherty and graded students on such things as tardiness, talking in class, and sleeping in class.

The students suggested reforms that would eliminate the dissatisfaction among students and make ASTC more attractive than it currently was to prospective students. An agreement was not reached with the administration and the students decided to strike the next day. The administrative executive committee then suggested that the students call off the strike and if this happened, they would work on an adjustment of the college regulations that students found objectionable.

The executive committee met on January 20 and recommended:

¹"Details Concerning Controversy Revealed in the Following Story," *The Appalachian* 29 January 1943, 1.

(1) That the college exercise the greatest patience and leniency with those students who have been absent from classes... (2) The student body should have a chance to stop and think about what it is doing, (3) In the future any grievances should come through the proper channels, (4) That the college maintain the good name of those students who were lending themselves to the orderly conduct of the college, and apply the same to all other students returning to classes, and (5) appeal to the students to go ahead with their academic work.¹

The executive committee's recommendations reveal a very paternalistic attitude toward the students. They sound more like a rebuke that a parent would make to an errant child than an administration talking to students.

The paternalistic attitude was typical for colleges across the country up until the 1960s and 1970s. At Vanderbilt University², a private college in Nashville, Tennessee, the administration in the 1920s tightened control over student life in an effort to curb "immorality." Chancellor James H. Kirkland created the position of Dean of Students in 1921 to handle student issues. The effort to curb "immorality" was not very successful, "most Vanderbilt

¹"Details Concerning Controversy Revealed in the Following Story," *The Appalachian* 29 January 1943, 1.

²Vanderbilt was chosen for comparison because it represents a private, Southern university as opposed to ASU which is a public southern university.

students still loved football and parties, and a higher percentage than ever before joined fraternities."¹

At ASTC, the student council established a demerit system in 1943. The demerit system operated on a quarterly basis and students who broke the college rules and regulations received demerits. If students received 50 demerit points, they were expelled. If they received 25 points, their parents were notified that their college conduct was unsatisfactory.

An editorial in a March 1943 edition of the student newspaper (Bill Killian was editor) supported the demerit system. "It replaces a human behavior system [human behavior grade] that failed. It places a responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the council. It marks a step in which a much-needed confidence between the students and the college administration can be restored."² The editorial went on to say that the demerit system would bring about the election of more responsible leaders to the student council, and would give it a more prominent position on campus.

In addition to the demerit system, the council also set

¹Paul K. Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy: A Biography of Vanderbilt University* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 295.

²"What Do Think of the Demerit System?," *The Appalachian* 5 March 1943, 2.

up dorm regulations in 1943. Girls were to have a closed study session from 8:15 to 10:15, and then have visiting from 10:15 to 11:00. During closed study session they were expected to study quietly in their rooms. The boys were not to have closed study sessions, but were asked to refrain from making unnecessary noise. The council thought these rules would benefit the students because they would provide a better study environment.¹

The experience of Vanderbilt women during World War II paralleled that of ASTC women. Vanderbilt women had a larger role in extracurricular activities during the war. A woman became editor of the school newspaper for the first time in the 1942-43 school year.² One difference between the wartime experience of Vanderbilt women versus that of ASTC women is that Vanderbilt women had more of a chance to participate directly in the war effort. Vanderbilt was located in a larger city where there were more opportunities for females to participate in the war effort. Vanderbilt also offered a nursing program; in July 1942, the 300th General Hospital, an all-Vanderbilt medical and nursing

¹"Council Sets Up Dorm Regulations," *The Appalachian* 19 March 1943, 1.

²Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 422.

unit, went on active duty in the European Theatre.¹ ASTC did not have a similiar organization.

Changes did occur for females at ASTC during World War II. There were opportunities for women to participate in student government due to the scarcity of men on campus, and there were some revisions in the school rules. However, there was no movement to fundamentally change women's position at ASTC because both men and women still followed traditional gender roles. Any changes that occurred during World War II were still seen to fall within women's sphere of activity, for example women working in war industries to support the male war effort, not to better their lives. When the men returned to campus after the war, they resumed the leadership positions on campus and women retreated to the shadows. The positions that women occupied during the war, no matter how vital, were still seen as less important than the positions that males held. The men were off fighting and winning the war.

Women's roles changed less at ASTC than in American society in general because ASTC females had fewer opportunities to work in non-traditional roles due to the lack of war industries in the Appalachian region. There were no large war factories in the area where ASTC females

¹Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 417.

could get jobs. ASTC did not have an active duty hospital unit that the females could join. There would not be a women's rights movement at ASTC until the 1970s.

Chapter Three

Return of the Men

During the post-war years and the 1950s, change occurred for females at ASTC in three main areas: a growing emphasis on domesticity (devotion to home and family life); the return of male veterans to campus; and the revision of rules. Women at ASTC continued to push for more rights, even during the domesticity of the 1950s. The administration seemed to be sending mixed messages to ASTC women: it continued *in loco parentis* and began a major in home economics; but it also relaxed some of the strict rules that students had to follow. They were telling women that they would give them a few more freedoms; but the females were still under the protection of the college and still had to follow traditional gender roles. It is interesting that at the same time that there was a promotion of the idea that women should return to the home, there was also a lessening of the rules that females had to follow. This means that the protest against *in loco parentis* that occurred during the 1960s actually began in the 1950s. This would be consistent with the viewpoints of the historians Leila J. Rupp and Verta Taylor. They argued that the women's rights

movement, contrary to popular belief, was active during the 1950s. The revolt that occurred during the 1960s and 1970s did not just come out of nowhere; it built upon the work of feminists during the 1950s and earlier.

Rupp and Taylor argued that the feminist movement was not mass-based during the 1950s, but "elite-sustained." The "women active on behalf of women's rights were relatively few in number, mostly survivors of the suffrage struggle who maintained their commitment in a period inhospitable to feminism."¹ While no women's rights groups existed at ASTC during the 1950s, some female students protested the strict rules that they had to follow. This activity continued into the 1960s.

In the 1950s, there was a growing emphasis on women's domesticity at ASTC as there was across the country. The media, political leaders, and educational leaders stressed the need for women to return to the home and take up domestic duties. This emphasis on women's domestic roles has been attributed by historians to different reasons. One of the reasons was the need to free up jobs for the returning World War II veterans. There was a fear that women would not give up their wartime factory jobs.

¹Leila J. Rupp and Verta Taylor, *Survival in the Doldrums: The American Women's Rights Movement, 1945 to the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 7.

Historian Ruth Milkman described the employment of women in wartime industry as an experiment that companies had been unwilling to participate in. "Despite the success with which women were integrated into 'men's jobs,' the war's end meant an end to the experiment, and management breathed a collective sigh of relief."¹

Historian Elaine Tyler May gave another reason for the stress on domesticity, the tensions brought about by the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union that occurred after World War II. During the Cold War, which lasted until the 1990s, the superpowers stared suspiciously at each other over their nuclear weapons. The family and home would be safe havens against the stresses of possible nuclear annihilation.

In a 1946 edition of the ASTC student paper, an article reflected this nuclear tension. "With the unleashing of atoms, the world into which we emerged is now, more than ever, in need of us. Not only do we represent the educated personnel necessary as leaders, but we are the stock from which future leaders are born."² The article went on to say that college graduates were not having enough children.

¹Milkman, *Gender at Work*, 101.

²"94% of Graduates Have Assumed the Matrimonial Yoke," *The Appalachian* 11 October 1946, 1.

Elaine May said that "in the early years of the Cold War, amid a world of uncertainties brought about by World War II and its aftermath, the home seemed to offer a secure private nest removed from the dangers of the outside world."¹ This helps to explain the baby boom that occurred after the war. There was a tension between female students going to college and yet being pressured to marry and have children. According to the writer Brett Harvey, this contradiction in roles was expressed in the clothing style of the time. "Our cinched waists and aggressively pointed breasts advertised our availability at the same time they warned of our impregnability."²

Part of the emphasis on domesticity was the ability of females to attract husbands. An editorial in a January 1946 edition of the newspaper discussed the importance of females looking their best. "Every girl wishes to be admired and to keep her feminine look."³ The editorial went on to complain that some girls wore their gym sweat suits too much. Some of them wore them uptown where they represented the school

¹Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 3.

²Brett Harvey, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1993), xi.

³"Girls, Look Your Best!" *The Appalachian* 11 January 1946, 2.

and made the other ASTC females look bad. "Remember there are almost 400 girls here besides you, and they wish to look their best."¹ The wearing of gym sweat suits might have been a way around the "no-slacks" rule. The editorial did not mention how the males looked; it was up to the female to attract a decent mate, thus pointing to the primary role of women in domesticity.

Another editorial in an October edition of the paper also complained about the appearance of some females. This time, the author objected to the wearing of blue jeans and slacks by some girls. "Other than cheating yourselves of the gracious beauty awarded your feminine sex, we might view this problem from the point of society...the criteria of good taste in dress that makes one a member of polite society of the twentieth century."² There were also class concerns: the students were to differentiate themselves from working-class women who wore jeans and slacks more than middle-class women. The article said that if the girls could not dress properly, they might as well have dressed in neckties and suits. In other words, if a female did not wear a dress and make-up, then she was not really a woman.

¹"Girls, Look Your Best!" *The Appalachian* 11 January 1946, 2.

²"On Being a Girl," *The Appalachian* 4 October 1946, 2.

Women were being judged on their looks, again pointing to the primacy of women's domestic role. Women had to look good so that they could attract husbands.

Female students could choose a program that would help prepare them for their role in the home, the Home Economics program. Appalachian had offered Home Economic courses from its early history, and had offered it as a major since the late 1930s. American colleges during the early 1900s were offering more vocational and home economics classes. The home economics classes "were seen during the first quarter of the century as preparing young women for their proper vocation, namely, homemaking."¹

During the 1950s, ASTC offered such courses as: *Elementary Textiles and Clothing Selection; Elementary Textiles and Clothing Construction; Elementary Meal Preparation and Table Service; Child Development; Children's Clothing; Home Furnishing; Household Equipment and Engineering; and Home Nursing and Health of the Family.* ASTC also offered a course titled *Home Management House Residence*. Students would live for one quarter in the Home Management House. The course was described as follows: "Utilization of income, time, labor, and talent. Varied

¹Cremin, *American Education*, 232.

experiences in family and social relationships."¹ This course gave students practical experience in how to run a home.

In the early 1960s, plans were drawn up for the building of a new Home Management House. Mary Brown Allgood, Chair of the Home Economics Department, in October 1963, reviewed the recommended plans for the Home Management House. The objectives of the Home Management course were:

1. To help the student integrate and correlate the learnings in the areas of home economics and outside fields with homemaking and to teach additional skills and techniques in several areas in the management of family and individual resources of time, energy, and money.
2. To give prospective home economics teachers additional information that can be used in high schools and with adult groups.
3. To give social experiences not possible in other classes.
4. To furnish an opportunity for family living similar to a beginning situation and to help the student understand the problems involved in maintaining a home.²

Again, trends at ASTC regarding Home Economics followed national trends. There was an attempt to make the position of housewife more interesting and to also make it more

¹ASTC Undergraduate Catalogue, 1959-60, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 84.

²Mary Brown Allgood, "Suggestions Regarding Item G of Review of Home Management House Plans," 17 October 1963, Plemmons Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

prestigious. "Educated middle-class women, whose career opportunities were severely limited, hoped that the home would become not a confining place of drudgery, but a liberating arena of fulfillment through professionalized homemaking, meaningful childrearing, and satisfying sexuality."¹ Home Economics courses taught females how to make housework more rewarding and interesting.

Home Economics courses were not the only courses that prepared women for their domestic roles. During the 1949-50 school year, the administration required new physical education classes for freshman females. The course, "Fundamentals of physical education," had two purposes. "First, to directing the students' attention to fundamentals of moving, walking, sitting, climbing stairs, which are essential to coordinated grace and poise; and, second, introducing the student to various activities which have value toward the development of leisure time skills and activities necessary to successful teaching."² The course also discussed dress and make-up. The article did not mention improving the students' health and strength as part of the course's goals. Again, this points to the importance

¹May, *Homeward Bound*, 22.

²"New Programs for Freshmen Inaugurated," *The Appalachian* 30 September 1949, 1.

of domesticity in the education of females during this time period.

The emphasis on domesticity at ASTC during the 1950s was further illustrated in an article in the student newspaper. The article, "How to Cook a Husband," was written by a Home Economics student. "A good many husbands are entirely spoiled by mismanagement in cooking and as a result are not tender and good."¹ The article recommended that a wife always agree with her husband. Even if the article was written as a satire, it reveals much about the students' expectations of marriage. It was the wife's job to make sure that the home ran smoothly.

An editorial in a September 1957 edition of the student newspaper discussed an article in *Newsweek* about female college students. The article stated that females had a higher grade point average than males and that they went to college to find marriage partners. Those who wanted to go into professions did not face discrimination. The editorial ended: "We must remember, men, that there is strength in numbers, for if the girls have their way we'll receive lower grades than they, be appropriate husbands, and, eventually,

¹Mildred Bear, "How to Cook a Husband," *The Appalachian* 26 October 1951, 2.

fathers of 2.7 children."¹ The writer's view of the genders is reflected in the language used, males were men, while females were girls. The editorial implied that it was female students who pushed domesticity onto themselves. While many females did willingly participate in the strengthening of domesticity, the males also benefitted from it. Domesticity encouraged wives to stay at home and take care of their husbands. Women's "intelligence, energy, creativity, and sexuality were funneled into the constricted sphere of family life."² Women were to help their husbands climb the corporate ladder.

Another change that female students at ASTC experienced during the post-war years and 1950s was the return of male veterans to campus in large numbers. An article in a September 1946 paper was titled, "Males Outnumber Weaker Sex." Of the 892 students enrolled for the 1946-47 school year, veterans comprised almost half of the student body. Of the 350 members of the freshmen class, approximately eighty percent were veterans. "The multitudes of veterans has almost balanced nature, or given the campus as many men

¹"A Word For Boys," *The Appalachian* 26 September 1957, 2.

²Harvey, *The Fifties*, xvi.

as women for the first time since A.S.T.C. opened."¹ The paper did not receive any complaints about the title of the article, at least none that they published.

There was also a return of male veterans to East Carolina's campus. "By 1947 the advent of the veteran had transformed the college into a thoroughly coeducational institution."² Like at Appalachian, the males assumed the leadership positions on campus. Domesticity was also emphasized during the 1950s at East Carolina; many female students were concerned with marriage and motherhood. Beauty pageants became popular on campus.

In a 1946 article in the paper, two students, Wilhelmena Ayers and Betty Cline, discussed their views of the veterans on campus.

The major criticism which I have for the G.I.'s is that many of them resent the fact that the six-point honor positions are filled mostly by girls. They can't seem to realize that during the time they were in service, it was necessary for girls to fill their positions. Last year when the '46- '47 elections were held, those persons whom the entire student body considered most efficient were elected. There are veterans here this year who, very capably, could fill those offices, but who, unfortunately were not here last year at election time. However, you'll get your chance, boys, in the next election to put these people in office.

¹"Males Outnumber Weaker Sex," *The Appalachian* 20 September 1946, 1.

²Bratton, *East Carolina University*, 301.

The chief criticism among veterans is not lack of efficiency, but is the mere fact that members of the weaker sex are in power this year.¹

As male veterans returned to campus, they were elected to leadership positions on campus. They became editors of the student newspaper and presidents of the student body. ASTC again followed national trends in regard to the return of men to campus. Veterans were returning to campuses all across the country and retaking leadership positions.

Although this editorial reflected the tensions between the sexes that came about after the war, there was no organized effort by the female students to retain the gains that they had made during the war. This was due in part to the transitory nature of college student bodies; what one class might resent at one time, the next class might not be familiar with the same issues. It was also due to the fact that women benefited from some of the dorm rules, such as the curfews. These rules guarded their reputation, which was essential to finding a good husband. This was before birth control pills and legalized abortions and "an extramarital pregnancy could be-and almost always was-

¹"Inquiring Reporter," *The Appalachian* 15 November 1946, 2.

disastrous."¹ Many doctors were unwilling to prescribe contraceptives to unmarried women and safe, affordable abortions were difficult to find. If a woman became pregnant out of wedlock, that basically left her three choices: marriage; adoption; or an unsafe abortion.

A third change that female students underwent in the post-war years and the 1950s was a loosening of the strict rules directed at them. In 1946 the female students of ASTC did gain several privileges, including being able to ride in an automobile, with their parents' permission of course. "Although young women have been discouraged from riding in automobiles, they may now obtain special permission from their parents or guardians, stating destination of trip, driver of the automobiles, length of trip, and time expected to return."² Permissions had to be approved by the Dean of Women. Even though female students gained the right to ride in cars, the administration still kept control of the females' activities off campus. Female students had to account for the time they were not on campus.

Female students gained another privilege in 1946, the right to attend the 7 o'clock movie. Again, the female had

¹Harvey, *The Fifties*, xvi.

²"Riding Permission for Girls Available from Matrons," *The Appalachian* 27 September 1946, 1.

to get permission from her parents or guardian, and eligibility depended upon her scholastic rating. Seniors were allowed to attend five nights a week, juniors three, sophomores two, and freshmen one night, and movie attendance counted as a date. An editorial that discussed this privilege stated that it "...marks the greatest step forward in the alteration of co-ed privileges in the history of this institution."¹ The author said that the granting of this privilege presented a challenge to the girls to prove their worthiness. They needed to shun abuse of these privileges. The students were thankful for any lessening of the strict rules they had to follow, but were not yet calling for an overthrow of these rules.

ASTC revised some rules for women in the 1950s. In 1951 seniors were allowed to attend Saturday night movies. In 1952, the riding rules were revised. An article in the student paper stated: "These changes have come about through a shift of responsibility from the college to the students and their parents."² Senior girls were allowed to receive standing ride permission from their parents which meant that they could use their own discretion. These

¹"On Privileges," *The Appalachian* 1 November 1946, 2.

²"Riding Rules Revised," *The Appalachian* 12 September 1952, 1.

privileges came about as a result of student demand. An editorial by Doris Haney discussed these new privileges.

These privileges not only eliminate the necessity for sending home numerous blanks, but it gives the girls the feeling that the administration has faith in their abilities to assume such responsibilities without abusing them. They realize that in case of an accident all responsibility rests upon themselves and their parents. Realizing this, the girls have acquired a more mature attitude of self-safety and reliability.¹

Haney thanked the administration for giving them the opportunity to prove their worthiness. The students had to prove that they were adults. Again, they were thankful for any small release from the strict rules that the administration placed upon them.

There were some protests against the strict rules. In October 1953, thirty-eight female students were admonished for keeping their lights on after hours. They were called to appear before the Student Council. "Many of the girls considered the whole thing a joke, laughingly greeted friends as they joined the group, and received demerits with mock tears."² It was the first time that year that lights had been checked and the rule enforced. One

¹Doris Haney, "An Accepted Responsibility," *The Appalachian* 19 September 1952, 2.

²"Girls Admonished for 'Burning Midnight Oil'," *The Appalachian* 30 October 1953, 1.

girl complained that the rule was dictatorial and adolescent.

Student Billie Ann Roberts wrote an article in which she complained about the strict rules that girls had to follow. She especially protested the "girls-in-by-8:00pm rule" and the "special permission-to-ride rule." "It's bad to have rules that seem to strangle you like chains but worse than that is not trying to do something to rid yourself completely of the rules or at least modernize them and make them more bearable as well as more understandable."¹

In an anonymous letter to the paper in 1958, a student protested the regulated hours of female students, especially the rule that they had to be in their dorms by 9:00 pm. The author urged more liberal hours and stated that this would not cause more females to fail or cause them to misbehave. "Women were emancipated by law in 1919. If law and science recognizes the superiority of women at the college age, why can't Appalachian State Teachers College do the same?"² Nonetheless, ASTC's administration still believed in *in loco parentis*, and the need for the university to protect the

¹Billie Ann Roberts, "The Gadabout," *The Appalachian* 15 April 1955, 2.

²"Letter to Editor," *The Appalachian* 4 December 1958, 2.

female students.

A homecoming edition of the paper discussed the changes in rules that had occurred after the war. "You, the class of 1947 were largely responsible for the social reforms which swept this campus in those post-war years, and 'liberated' the co-ed here."¹ The fact that the word liberated is in quotes raises the question of whether the author was being satirical when he/she used this word. While there was a small relaxing of the strict rules during this time period, there certainly was not a "liberation."

The altering of rules continued into the late 1950s. There was a revision of women's rules in 1955 regarding out-of-town games and library privileges. The girls could go to out-of-town games if they had permission from their parents. Girls living in East Hall, Lovill, White Hall, and Dauph Blan were allowed to go to the library from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm at night. Those who stayed at the library until 9:00 were allowed to go to the Bookstore until 9:15 pm, presumably as a reward for their studious behavior.

Female students at Vanderbilt University during the 1950s shared many of the same experiences with ASTC females. Vanderbilt women experienced sexist repression; the school

¹"Your Memory May Be Hazy, Nevertheless, You Were There," *The Appalachian* 24 October 1957, 3.

paper gave the impression that women "were primarily sex objects, at the university [they were] to be the playthings of men."¹ Like at ASTC, many Vanderbilt women made marriage and the raising of children one of their top priorities. The Vanderbilt community valued women mostly for their beauty or charm, things that were important in attracting a future husband. This was shown by the fact that there were several beauty and charm contests during this period.

ASTC female students experienced changes in three main areas during the postwar years and the 1950s: a growing emphasis on domesticity; the return of male veterans to campus; and the revision of rules. As was characteristic of other decades, any changes that occurred were superficial but not deep. The administration made some of the rules less strict, but still maintained control over every aspect of the students' lives. The 1950s were characterized more by the emphasis on domesticity.

¹Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 517.

Chapter Four

Discontent

Female students at Appalachian State Teacher's College benefitted from the revolt that occurred in the 1960s against *in loco parentis*, or the view of university as parent. This revolt would be the seed of the women's rights movement at ASTC. Both female and male students had to follow strict rules up until the 1960s and 1970s. In the October 6, 1960, issue of *The Appalachian*, Brenda Penley, president of the all-girls dorm Lovill Hall, discussed the dorm rules that females were to follow. "Signing out and in at the proper times is the easiest, yet most difficult rule to remember. Girls must sign out on the Daily Sheet when hiking or riding outside the city limits of Boone, attending activities after 9:00 off campus and dating in the parlour."¹ Female students were not allowed to sit in parked cars, or ride in a car after 8:00 pm except when returning from home or a movie date. "Obedience to all regulations is very important, as each rule is backed by a

¹Brenda Penley, "Regulation Review for Girls in Dorm," *The Appalachian* 6 October 1960, 4.

good, sensible reason for its existence. Each girl is free to examine these reasons, and if she then believes a rule to be unfair or discriminate she should discuss it with her house president, resident counselor, or Dean Edminsten."¹ Penley's tone indicated that she might have heard complaints about the rules being too restrictive.

Not every student agreed that the rules were necessary. Isabella Newton, a female student, stated: "I do not see how the students at Appalachian can afford not to pass the Academic Honor System. We complain that we are treated as children- we are now given a chance to be treated as adults."² The Honor System would have put the responsibility of not cheating on the students. It was later defeated by the student body. Some students might have been afraid of the added responsibility and might have preferred to leave it in the hands of the administration. Another possible reason for the rejection of the Honor System was the conservativeness of the ASTC student body. As mentioned earlier, the lack of diversity of Appalachian's student body meant that students were less likely to push

¹Brenda Penley, "Regulation Review for Girls in Dorm," *The Appalachian* 6 October 1960, 4.

²"Students' Viewpoint," *The Appalachian*, 16 February 1961, 4.

for or support change.

In 1961, however, a vocal minority of students protested for reform, particularly regarding the Honor System. In 1961, students held rallies to protest the cut system and curfew hours for girls. They started six petitions: "Higher Quality Education;" "Abolishment of Demerit System;" "Revision of Library Hours;" "More Liberal Cut System;" "Later Curfew Hours for Girls;" and "Students Desire Sportswear be Accepted."¹ An editorial in the April 13, 1961, *Appalachian* stated: "It seems that these recent events are indicative of certain changes from past years in the composition of ASTC students. The same type of people will not endure without protest for years and then suddenly burst loose their feelings."² This student protest movement would be the seed of the women's rights movement at Appalachian. As seen above, the student protest movement incorporated female demands, especially regarding dorm rules.

In 1963, the Student Council and administration organized a demerit point system for students. The reasons

¹"Students Hold Rallies to Protest Restrictions," *The Appalachian* 13 April 1961, 2.

²"An Interpretation," *The Appalachian*, 13 April 1961, 2.

given for its initiation were that it was "to foster self-discipline" and "to simplify the work of the various House Councils."¹ The demerit system was to be the basis for freshmen discipline. Points would accumulate on a yearly basis and when the student reached a total of twenty points he/she would be referred to the student council.

Not every student was happy with the demerit system. An editorial in the October 3, 1963, edition of the student newspaper discussed this new system. The author pointed out that the upperclass students forced it upon the freshmen dorms. Supporters of the system wanted it because they felt that the dorms needed to be quieter and more orderly. "On the other side of the fence stand those who declare the demerit system is unfair, and we are inclined to agree with them."² The author agreed that females should be given demerits for drinking and stealing but not for such things as taking a bath after 11:00 p.m. Another complaint was that women were being treated like children. The majority of upperclass women did not get to discuss or vote on the demerit system. Female students received demerits for such

¹"House Councils Approve New Demerit Point System," *The Appalachian* 26 September 1963, 1.

²"Who Merits Demerits?", *The Appalachian* 3 October 1963, 2.

things as talking out of a window, cooking in their rooms, or wearing shorts in forbidden areas. The author did not protest the fact that women had to follow these rules and men did not. This indicates that ASTC students had not developed a feminist consciousness; they did not question the male domination of the administration.

In March of 1965 the student council extended the female's dormitory hours. "The dormitory hours for upperclass girls shall be changed as follows- Monday through Friday, 11:00 pm; Saturday 12:00 midnight; Sunday, 11.00."¹ The Student Council recommended that all females should be able to stay out until 1:00 a.m. for major dances on campus; however, the administration changed it to 12:30 a.m.²

An April 1966 editorial discussed the need for revision of the demerit system. The author argued that the enforcement of petty rules was hurting the welfare of the female students.

Most of the women who are now coming to this campus are used to more liberal and adult rules. They, therefore, naturally rebel at the ridiculous rules which are forced upon them as co-eds at a college- an institution for young adults who are

¹"Co-eds Hours are Changed," *The Appalachian* 18 March 1965, 1.

²W.H. Plemmons, "Memo to Mr. H.R. Eggers," February 23, 1965, William H. Plemmons Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

supposedly the most intelligent and the most mature of their high school classes.¹

The author suggested that a committee made up of the Dean of Women, the Dean of Student Affairs, the dorm counselors, the presidents of the dorms, and student leaders should meet and revise the system. This editorial suggests that society's rules were loosening up; therefore, female students were no longer as willing to tolerate strict rules.

Another editorial discussed the need for revision of the student rules. A committee of the student council had made some dorm rules more lenient. The author agreed that the changes were a step in the right direction but disagreed with two rules that were not revised. The first rule prohibited women from visiting men's apartments and the second prohibited the consumption of alcohol. The majority of students ignored these rules anyway, according to the author.²

Eventually, these rules also were revised. An editorial in a May 1967 edition of the student newspaper lauded the changes that occurred.

We asked that girls be allowed to wear slacks; we got it. We asked for a revision

¹"Revision of Women's Demerit System," *The Appalachian* 22 April 1966, 2.

²"More Rule Revisions Needed at Appalachian," *The Appalachian* 18 November 1966, 2.

of the ancient drinking rules; we got it. We asked for later girls hours; we got it. We asked for off-campus visiting permission for the girls; we got it. These and many more smaller but no less important changes in the rules and regulations were passed, first by our 'do nothing' student government and then by our 'Puritanical' administration.¹

In 1968 the student government passed a student Bill of Rights, and it was approved by the students. The Bill of Rights basically treated students as mature adults and undercut *in loco parentis*.

Vanderbilt University students were also struggling against *in loco parentis* during the same time period. The old student senate voted to abolish itself in 1965 and a new constitution provided for a board of presidents made up of campus leaders. In 1967 the board demanded a student center, more courses on current affairs, and more informal contact with professors. The one issue on which students received no concessions was student voice in faculty tenure decisions. "For over a decade they campaigned for student representation on appointment and tenure committees in the College, but the faculty refused to yield any power in this area."²

Students at East Carolina also saw an end to *in loco*

¹"Now It's Our Turn," *The Appalachian* 11 May 1967, 2.

²Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 638.

parentis during the 1960s. Students protested for more dormitories and had a bigger say in the governing of the university. In 1971 students marched on the president's home to demand unlimited visitation privileges for both sexes and several demonstrators were arrested. "Within a year, when visitation regulations similiar to those in effect on campuses of the other state universities were approved, the students' demands were essentially satisfied."¹

In a January 1969 edition of the ASU student newspaper, Kitty Carson discussed the proposals for new girls hours at a Student Government Association (SGA) meeting. There was a division among upperclass students and lowerclass students on what the new hours should be. Conservative members of the senior class proposed the most restricting hours: Seniors with a 2.0 quality rating would have self-limiting hours, and other female students would have three special lates each quarter. The junior representatives proposed unlimited hours on Friday and Saturday nights and extended hours on Sunday night. The sophomore representatives proposed the most liberal plan: Females over the age of 21 would have unlimited hours and third-quarter freshmen would be allowed late hours until 4:00 am with parent's

¹Bratton, *East Carolian University*, 438.

permission. A night watchman would be on patrol to let the females in.¹

The most liberal proposals came from the sophomore class. This suggests that the students coming in were more liberal than the older students, and this signified a shift in the student body. In fact, a poll of the student body taken in February of 1969 suggested that the students were overwhelmingly in favor of the most liberal proposal for women's hours.²

In May of 1969 it was announced that an experiment would be tried in the 1969-70 school year whereby two residence halls would be reserved as "no curfew" halls for upper-class women. This experiment failed because of lack of interest of the female students; not enough students signed up for the halls. When female students had a chance to get rid of curfews, they did not take it. They might have been afraid of the added responsibility, or maybe their parents just did not allow them to stay in a "no curfew" hall. This relates to something that is going on at ASU today, the starting up of the new Women's Center in the Fall

¹Kitty Carson, "SGA Hears Proposals for New Girls' Hours," *The Appalachian* 17 January 1969, 1.

²"Results of Poll Women's Hours," *The Appalachian* 21 February 1969, 1.

of 1998. Some students have been pushing hard for this center, and yet it might fail if not enough students volunteer to work in it. The center was slated to open in Spring Semester 1998, but had to be delayed because of lack of volunteers.¹ This suggests that it was a vocal minority that pushed for change, but they did not have the support of the majority of the student body.

Another area of female student protest in the 1960s was clothing. The attitude that some rebelled against is typified by a letter to the editor in the 1964 edition of the student paper. Student Marvin M. Helton wrote that he got the impression that the girls on campus were pregnant because of the shape of their dresses. "The girls that I have talked to on campus say that the dresses are comfortable; this is probably so, but the 'maternity dresses' cut down on a girl's chances of a date."² Some male students believed that the priority of female students was to get dates and find a husband; therefore they should take into consideration what type of clothing the males wanted to see them in.

¹Lee Williams, Interview with author, 8 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Marvin M. Helton, "Pregnancy," *The Appalachian* 23 January 1964, 2.

Faye Willborn, in a letter to the editor in an October 1966 issue of the student paper, attacked the no slacks rule. The rule stated that slacks could not be worn to classes, uptown, library, bookstore, cafeteria, and dorm parlors. "Why is this rule in existence? Why are girls made to feel like criminals, stealthily plotting complex paths where slacks are legal? Is it not the girl's own free decision to wear or not to wear slacks to a movie, the bookstore, cafeteria, or elsewhere?"¹ She attacked the notion that slacks were indecent by pointing out that shorter skirts were more revealing than pants.

In February of 1967 there was a new SGA ruling on the wearing of slacks. "Slacks and bermudas are to be worn at the discretion of the girls except to classes, to the library, and to the cafeteria at the noon and evening meals on Sundays. On extremely cold days, slacks may be worn to classes and the library."² The students were not quite sure how to interpret this rule; who would determine what "extremely cold days" were? The females always risked being told by an administrator or faculty member that it was not

¹Faye Willborn, "Letters to the Editor," *The Appalachian* 14 October 1966, 2.

²"New Rule on Slacks," *The Appalachian* 23 February 1967, 1.

cold enough and that they would have to change into a dress. The slacks rule would later be abolished.

There were many outside influences on female students at Appalachian State University during the 1960s. In 1963, the North Carolina legislature passed a speaker ban law that caused protests on college campuses across North Carolina, including ASTC. Ora Eads argued against the Communist-Ban Bill in an article in the student newspaper. "The members of the General Assembly, adopting a paternalistic attitude, feel that they are better able than the college administrators to decide who should speak on the campuses of state-supported colleges and universities."¹ Eads said that it was up to the students to prevent their rights from being taken away from them. Not only were the students fighting the paternalistic attitude of the General Assembly, but they were also fighting against the paternalistic attitude of the college administrators. This meant that students were responding more broadly to limits on their rights.

Some historians have argued that the women's rights movement came out of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Women learned how to organize and protest from their participation in the Movement. Through their participation

¹Ora Eads, "General Assembly Takes Paternal Role," *The Appalachian* 26 September 1963, 1.

in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left, women "found the inner strength and self-respect to explore the meaning of equality and an ideology that beckoned them to do so."¹ Women gained experience in organizing and collective action. Because of its historically low percentage of black students, this was not the case at Appalachian State University.

The first black student to enroll at ASTC for a regular school year was Muriel Patricia Ferguson, who enrolled in 1963. In October of 1963, Ferguson was interviewed for the student newspaper. She stated that she had not had any trouble and that everyone had been nice to her. She chose ASTC because it was close to her home, the tuition was cheaper, and the curriculum was better than other schools she considered. Louise Walker, the author of the article, ended by saying: "Pat entered ASTC under the same rules and regulations as any other student; no special requirements have been placed upon her."²

Two weeks later, Van Morrow wrote a letter to the editor describing an incident that occurred with Pat

¹ Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 23.

²Louise Walker, "Negro Co-ed Interviewed," *The Appalachian* 10 October 1963, 4.

Ferguson, who was a member of the school band. Several members of the band went to an uptown restaurant to eat.

"There, sitting among her fellow students, Pat was told that the restaurant was not integrated and that she would have to leave. Pat smiled and, of course, left. Several of her friends left with her- many of us, who already had our meals, stayed."¹ The author argued that the students should demand respect for each one of their fellow students- regardless of color. However, there was no call for sit-ins or boycotts of the restaurant. More black students did not arrive at ASTC until the latter 1960s.

Another outside influence on female students nationally was the Vietnam War and the New Left. "Although the New Left was engaged in a cultural revolt, championing openness and honesty, sexual freedom, and the end of campus regulations *in loco parentis*, it reflected more than it challenged the underlying sexual stereotypes of these early years."² It was the mistreatment of women in the New Left that motivated some women to form their own feminist groups. Unlike other campuses, the New Left was not very active on the ASTC campus. Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a

¹Van Morrow, "Negro Co-ed Saluted," *The Appalachian* 24 October 1963, 2.

²Sara Evans, *Personal Politics*, 116.

"radical" organization, never became popular on the ASTC campus. When Vietnam War protestors tried to speak on campus one time, they were kicked off campus. ASTC did have a Vietnam Teach-in on November 22, 1966, where both sides of the issue were discussed.¹

The fact that neither the Civil Rights movement nor the New Left was active on campus raises the question of where the impetus for change came from. The 1960s were a decade of change for women at Appalachian. Students called for changes to the *in loco parentis* system, and they received these changes. The student government and administration made dorm rules, especially for females, less strict. Students began to be treated more as adults and less as children. The impetus for change in the 1960s came from the students; they were struggling to gain more rights.

The student push for more rights at Appalachian was influenced by what was going on nationally. Students on campuses across the country were struggling against *in loco parentis* and for more rights. During the 1960s, young people across the country were rebelling against the status quo and in the age of television, Appalachian students would have known about and been influenced by this struggle.

¹"Vietnam Teach-In to be Held Nov. 22," *The Appalachian*, 10 November 1966, 1.

Chapter Five

Striving for Equality

Changes in the 1960s were student led and had to do with all students, particularly female students, receiving more rights. Changes in the early 1970s, however, were faculty instigated and dealt more with women organizing for their rights. This suggests that the faculty had more exposure to the demands of the women's movement. The faculty were more likely to come from colleges that had active feminist organizations. Many of the new female faculty during the late 1960s and 1970s were from larger universities: Joyce Crouch earned her doctorate at the University of Tennessee; Sandra Ann Horvath at Catholic University; Helena Lewis at New York University; and Margaret McFadden at Emory University.¹ These faculty members were instrumental in bringing Women's Studies to ASU.

There are three main areas where changes occurred for

¹*Undergraduate Catalogue*, 1979-80, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

ASU women during the 1970s: student extra-curricular activities; faculty concerns; and student curricular issues. The ratio of female students to male students affected these areas. Appalachian has traditionally had more female students than male due to its roots as a teacher's college and this was also true in the 1970s. In 1974, there were 4,045 female students and 3,969 men.¹ After Appalachian became a university, the number of male enrollments climbed but male students still remained in the minority. In the years 1975-79 female students consistently outnumbered male students. The acceptance/application ratio also was consistently higher for females during this period.² Nationally, female enrollments in colleges increased during the 1970s. "By 1974 about four million women were enrolled in degree credit programs and about 4.9 million males, representing a six-fold increase for women...since 1946."³

One area where extra-curricular changes occurred for ASU females was in the revision of dormitory rules. The effort to revise dormitory rules continued into the 1970s.

¹Jimmie Register, "Male Enrollment Up; Women Still Outnumber Men," *The Appalachian*, 3 October 1974, 1.

²*Appalachian State University Annual Fact Book* (Boone, Appalachian State University, 1980), 33.

³Patricia Sexton, *Women in Education* (Bloomington: Phi Delta Kappa, 1976), 12.

In February 1970, the Student Senate passed four bills concerning dormitory regulations. The bills changed room inspection, freshmen closed-study, and the parlor dating hours in the women's dorms. The Room Inspection Policy changed from weekly, unannounced inspections to announced, once-a-month inspections. The administration changed the freshmen closed study policy to Fall Quarter only. The other quarters there would be quiet hours instead. They also extended the dating hours.¹

A September 1970 article in *The Appalachian*, "Women Acquire New Rights, Different Rules," described the revisions in dorm rules. Upper-class women no longer had a curfew. If they returned to the dorms after they were locked, they had to find a security guard to let them in. Freshmen women were still required to sign in and out and were locked out of their dorms if they returned after closing hours. They were also required to have signed permission forms from their parents and had to abide by the type of permission given regarding how late they could stay out.²

¹Bob Williams, "Senate Passes Resolutions," *The Appalachian* 13 February 1970, 1.

²"Women Acquire New Rights, Different Rules," *The Appalachian* 8 September 1970, 1.

In 1972, the students received permission to have visitation in the dorms. In their 1973 letter to the editor, John Carter and Stan Johnson wrote: "The policy [visitation] meant that while other major universities across the United States had co-ed dorms, or at least 24 hour open dorms, Appalachian State University students could on Friday and Saturday from 8 p.m. til 1 a.m. (six weeks out of eleven), have people of the opposite sex in their room--providing of course, their doors were open, and the lights were on, and there were enough people staying the weekend to supervise and participate in visitation."¹

In September 1972, ASU did start a co-ed dorm. Watauga College was an experimental co-ed dorm for freshmen students. Some of the courses were taken inside the dorm and some faculty members lived in the dorm. The students took courses in Latin, Chemistry, Philosophy, History, Art, German, Literature, Speech, and other topics.² As mentioned earlier, President Wey stressed educational innovation, and it was under his administration that Watauga College was started. During the 1970s, more dorms were to become co-ed.

¹"Visitation and the Sexes," *The Appalachian* 6 May 1973, 2.

²Chilton Rogers, "Coed Dorm Offers New Experience," *The Appalachian* 18 September 1973, 1.

Appalachian was slightly behind other universities in the founding of co-ed dorms. Men at Vanderbilt University in 1967 asked for and received longer female visiting hours and in 1970 there was the first co-ed dorm. In 1969, the administration abolished all curfews for women over twenty-one and for sophomores with parental permission. The shift to mixed dorms in 1970 made the dorms more like apartments which meant that the students had the same rights as adults living off-campus.¹

Another extra-curricular area where changes occurred for ASU females was in the student government. One of the first female presidents of the ASU student body after the World War II era was Ava Creech, who was elected in 1970. She was attorney general of the student council before she became president, and worked for increased student rights. She established an anti-search and seizure policy to protect student rights.

During her administration, the image of student judiciary had transformed from that of a conduct committee to a court of original jurisdiction. ASU's judicial system has received national recognition and is currently on file in Washington, DC to serve as a model for other student governments.²

¹Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 640.

²Nita Hillard, "Attorney General Receives State Recognition," *The Appalachian* 18 December 1969, 1.

Creech ended up being a popular president and received recognition as "Mountaineer of the Week" for her contributions to student government.

In 1974, ASU started a Women's Resource Center (WRC). It was directed by Dr. Gail McClain who said that the women who began the center designed it to "promote the personal development of women on campus, the local community and the region...[it] will offer support and guidance to women for personal growth, current and continuing education and career development."¹ Donna Helseth, a counselor at the Counseling Center, also helped organize the WRC. One of the first programs that it offered was on assertiveness. Female assertiveness was also a concern of the national women's movement. Many women's liberation groups were concerned with "consciousness-raising," where participants were encouraged to develop a feminist consciousness. They encouraged women to question gender bias and the male-biased power structure.

One of the contributions that the WRC made to the campus was to introduce a new service in September of 1974:

¹Elaine Turner, "WRC Promotes, Supports Women," *The Appalachian* 9 May 1974, 1.

Temporary, Interim Child-care (TICC). TICC was a child-care service for the students, faculty, and staff of ASU (as well as other parents in the community) and its fees varied according to the status of the person requesting the service. The fees were fifty cents per hour, per child for students; seventy-five cents for faculty and staff; and one dollar for parents in the community. The service was located inside the WRC and ran from September 1974 to August 1976. ASU opened a University Day Care Center in September 1976.

Another area where women at Appalachian struggled for equality was sports. In the 1970s women demanded more equality in sports. Congress passed Title IX of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which prohibited sex discrimination in federally funded educational institutions. The effect of Title IX on women's sports at ASU will be discussed later. Some female students wanted women's sports to get more attention from the students and the newspaper. In 1970, a series of columns written by Robbie Sharett gave a female's view of sports. "Not very often does one find a female writer gracing the pages of the sports section of this, or any other, newspaper."¹ The fact that she was writing the

¹Robbie Sharett, "The ASU 1970 Football Season," *The Appalachian* 15 December 1970, 5.

article now indicated a change in attitudes toward women and sports. More attention was being paid to women's sports. ASU followed a national trend in the recognition of women's sports; the 1970s was a decade in which female sportswriters were breaking barriers in professional journalism.

Another main area where change occurred for ASU females was the area of faculty concerns. Male faculty outnumbered female faculty during the 1970s. For the Fall 1979, there were 409 male to 159 female faculty members; male faculty also held a disproportionately large share of senior faculty positions. For professors, males numbered 150 and there were only 19 female professors. As the positions went down in rank, the number of males dropped and the number of females rose until the lecturer position where there were twenty-seven females and twenty-six males.¹ This disproportion in faculty by gender was also the case nationally. There were several barriers to women faculty. "Because more men than women are encouraged to attend graduate school, present papers at meetings, and publish them, the standard of competence has been established by male performance."² Women were discriminated against in

¹*Appalachian State University Annual Fact Book* (Boone, Appalachian State University, 1980), 70.

²Patricia Harris, "Problems and Solutions in Achieving Equality for Women," in Todd Furniss and Patricia Graham,

scholarship and financial aid. They were also affected by domestic concerns; in 1976, twenty-one percent of female graduate students dropped out of school because of pressure from their spouses.¹ This meant that there was not a large pool of qualified female applicants that the colleges could draw upon.

There was an effort during the 1970s to correct these inequities. The faculty formed an organization called ASU Faculty Women. In 1974 they sponsored a colloquium called "I-Woman." They sponsored two speakers a month in an effort to explore the barriers and problems facing women. One of the speakers, Ruby Akers, discussed "Aspects of Liberation." The president of the ASU Faculty Women was Dr. Hubertien Williams. She said: "We want to sponsor a series of speakers from different areas to promote understanding and discussion."²

The Faculty Women changed its name to the Faculty Concerned With the Status of Women because the name excluded male faculty members. In an interview in 1998, Dr. Maggie

eds., *Women in Higher Education* (Washington: American Council on Education, 1974), 11.

¹Sexton, *Women in Education*, 83.

²"Faculty Women Sponsor Colloquium," *The Appalachian* 12 February 1974, 9.

McFadden stated that the organization was told to change its name by University Equal Opportunity Officer Dr. Richard D. Howe after the passage of Title IX because there was a risk that they could be sued for the exclusion of males.¹ Dr. Patricia D. Beaver was president of the organization during the late 1970s. In February 1978, she wrote a memo to Howe concerning the effectiveness of the ASU Affirmative Action Plan. Beaver requested information from Howe so that the organization could evaluate Affirmative Action at ASU.²

According to Beaver, Faculty Concerned With the Status of Women had three main goals: mentoring and personal reinforcement for faculty; discussing and acting upon the inequities that existed at ASU; and bringing in outside speakers to help in the intellectual development of faculty and students. There were members who kept up with the outside women's movement and feminist issues as they were addressed on other campuses.³

The Faculty Concerned With the Status of Women organized the Conference on Women and Power that was held at

¹Maggie McFadden, Interview by author, 25 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Patricia D. Beaver, "Memo to Dr. Richard D. Howe," 16 February 1978, EEO Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

³Patricia Beaver, Interview by author, 23 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

ASU on September 27-29, 1979. "Faculty Concerned With the Status of Women chose to concentrate this Conference within the State of North Carolina and especially at Appalachian State University rather than appeal to a multi-state audience."¹ The conference was held in the Lillie Shull Dougherty Home Economics Building.

Another faculty organization that was active on campus during the 1970s was the American Association of University Women. Ms. H. Earlene Campbell was the ASU Corporate Representative during the late 1970s. The AAUW Corporate Program "...provides a structure through which institutions form an alliance with the grass root membership to *mobilize support for higher education*."² AAUW's legislative program during the 1970s supported such things as quality education at post-secondary institutions and lifelong general education. They also provided money for graduate fellowship programs to try to correct the imbalance that existed in financial aid to females.

Women faculty at ASU followed national trends in their struggle to gain more rights. At Vanderbilt University in

¹M. Joan Terry, "Registration for Conference Memo," 14 September 1979, Herbert Wey Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Marjorie Bell Chambers, "Letter to Dr. Wey," Wey Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

1972, a new organization- Professional Women at Vanderbilt- asked for a commission to study women's status and to develop a new plan for affirmative action. The commission submitted a final report in 1976. "While the commission investigated, women faculty and students organized, developed a sense of shared adversity, and began as militant an advocacy in behalf of women's rights as Vanderbilt had ever known."¹

There were several curricular changes that occurred for female students at ASU during the 1970s. The faculty women influenced the founding of women's studies at ASU in the early 1970s. In an interview in 1996, Dr. Maggie McFadden made the point that faculty basically pushed through the program with little or no administrative help.² ASU was not the first college or university to start women's studies courses, although it was part of an early wave of colleges to start them. According to one estimate in 1970, fifty-five colleges and universities were offering women's studies courses. "The call for women's studies has grown out of a feeling on the part of many women faculty members and

¹Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 720.

²Maggie McFadden, Interview by Joanna Yount, 15 November 1996, Tape Recording, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

students that women are being largely ignored by most of the academic disciplines and that too much of the study of women is being done by men."¹

The student newspaper at ASU had an article on women's studies courses in 1973. Four new women's studies courses were offered in the 1973-74 school year: "Women Orators in America;" "Psychology of Sex Differences;" "The Individual in Society;" and "Women in History."²

In 1974 a "women only" course in History 104 was proposed by Dr. Sandra Horvath. The course would have had the same material as the others, the only difference would have been that the instructor and all of the students would have been female. Horvath said:

According to the claims of certain educators, female students in colleges and universities often profit greatly from learning experiences free from the presence of men. These opportunities eliminate the operation of sex-role stereotypes which are usually positive for men (brave, strong, aggressive, and worldly) and negative for women (weak, passive, and not too bright) and help women to develop their leadership abilities and

¹Philip W. Semas, "55 Campuses Now Offering Courses in Women's Studies," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 5 (November 30, 1970): 1.

²Chilton Rogers, "Curriculum Joins Lib Drive; Women Move to Front Seat," *The Appalachian* 1 November 1973, 1.

self-confidence.¹

Horvath also proposed a residential college for freshmen women which was not implemented. One may question the basis for the opposition to these plans. There are two areas from which opposition could have come. The male-biased hierarchy might have thought that these plans were too radical. Opposition could also have come from feminists who disagreed with the segregation of the sexes. Segregation could lead to the trivialization of women by making them appear separate and in need of special treatment.

In 1976, faculty members proposed a minor in women's studies and the administration adopted it. A committee of ten faculty members compiled a brochure listing the courses offered by the program. The co-chairpersons of the committee were Dr. Helena Lewis of the History Department and Dr. Maggie McFadden of Interdisciplinary Studies. Some of the courses offered were: "Sex Images in Literature;" "Women in the Western World: The Changing Roles of Women in History;" "The Psychology of Sex-role Differences: Psychological, Social and Personal Implications;" and "Women

¹Paula Stanley, "'Women Only' Course Planned," *The Appalachian* 31 January 1974, 1.

in Contemporary Society."¹

Other southern universities were also offering women's studies. Vanderbilt University offered its first women's studies course in 1972, and by 1982 was offering three to four courses each semester. The program came about because of student demand and faculty support.²

There are several reasons why women's studies are important. There has been a prodigious amount of women's scholarship written since the 1960s. This scholarship needed to be incorporated into the curriculum. "Women's Studies faculty need to look both inward and outward as we seek to make the curriculum more responsive to women's experience, as we address the intersections of race and class with gender, and as we imagine alternatives to the institutional structures that have excluded women and non-white cultures in the past."³ Women's Studies courses use gender, race, and class as categories of analysis. This is important because it allows the students to study issues that they normally wouldn't look at in traditional courses.

¹Debbie Cook, "Variety Offered," *The Appalachian* 7 December 1976, 1.

²Conkin, *Gone With the Ivy*, 720.

³Marilyn R. Schuster and Susan R. Van Dyne, eds., *Women's Place in the Academy: Transforming the Liberal Arts Curriculum* (Totowa: Rowan & Allanhold, 1985), 6.

For example, using class as a category of analysis means that the students study such issues as poverty and welfare which they might not normally study. Women's Studies courses continue to be popular with the students at ASU.

ASU female students had many outside influences during the 1970s. The U.S. Congress passed legislation that affected women across the country. William Friday, president of The University of North Carolina, wrote a memo to the chancellors of the individual schools in September 1972. He requested that they appoint

...representatives to serve on the University Equal Employment Opportunity Committee; in view of the fact that the coverage of the federal regulatory programs is comprehensive, embracing both academic and nonacademic personnel, and that different considerations may be applicable to the two basic categories of University employment, may I suggest that your delegation consist of two individuals: (a) your Director of Personnel and (b) that administrative official... who has final responsibility... for academic personnel questions.¹

One of the offices that affected women at ASU during the 1970s was the Equal Opportunity Office headed by Richard Howe. This office dealt with such things as Affirmative Action, pay discrepancies, and compliance with federal

¹William Friday, "Equal Employment Opportunity Memo," 28 September 1972, Equal Employment Opportunity Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

regulations such as Title IX. Howe, in a speech in October 1975, discussed Affirmative Action under both Executive Order 11246 and Title IX. The Executive Order prohibited discrimination in hiring on the basis of race, color, religion, sex and natural origin. It encompassed two concepts: non-discrimination and affirmative action.

"Affirmative Action requires us to make additional efforts to recruit, employ, and promote qualified members of groups formerly excluded even if any exclusion we may have cannot be traced to a particular discriminatory action on our part."¹

The Federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) requested that five parts of Affirmative Action be implemented: goals and timetables; non-discrimination policy; personnel policy; contract compliance; and the role of Affirmative Action Officers. "We started in 1973 with a three-year goals program which will end in 1976 during which we hope to be fully utilizing women and minority persons in the work force here. In 1976 we will write a new goals

¹Richard D. Howe, "Remedying Discrimination Through Affirmative Action," Speech at the Conference for Governors and Trustees of the University of North Carolina, 23 October 1975, EEO Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 3.

program for three or more years."¹ In order to make these goals, the administration did a thorough analysis of the workforce to see where ASU was underutilizing women and minorities.

Howe also discussed Title IX which prohibited sex discrimination in federally-funded educational institutions. ASU addressed three areas: student admissions; employment; and the academic, social, and extracurricular experience of students after admission. Title IX provided for an initial year of self-evaluation to the institutions; and a transition period of three years for physical education and athletics.

Professor Isabel Jones who is our new Title IX Coordinator will work with me and together we have a task force of ten persons appointed by the Chancellor and selected from across the University to work with us. Additionally, we have twenty-four faculty members in the academic departments who serve as Equal Opportunity Associates and they, too, form a part of our university-wide efforts.²

Howe went on to say that these efforts to comply with federal regulations had created heavy burdens on the administration in terms of time and energy.

¹Howe, "Remedying Discrimination Through Affirmative Action," 4.

²Howe, "Remedying Discrimination Through Affirmative Action," 9.

The administration appointed Dr. Isabel Jones, in 1975, Professor of Reading Education and Vice Chairperson of the Faculty Senate, to coordinate the implementation of Title IX at ASU. In a memo to administrators at the University of North Carolina system in 1976, Jones discussed the progress of the efforts to comply with Title IX. She stated that she "should like to state that lack of communication concerning the Title IX effort, its purposes and procedures, seems to me to be our major problem. It is not so much opposition to the program...that disturbs us; rather it is the apparent apathy and seeming indifference that concern us most."¹

The article "Title IX Orders Opportunities for Men, Women" discussed the effect of Title IX on women's sports at ASU. The article made the point that women's sports were already strong at ASU compared to other schools. In fact, ASU was the first southern college to hire a woman as an athletic administrator. Associate Athletic Director Dr. Judith Clarke stated: "The main areas that I foresee that Appalachian needs to improve in are scholarships and more

¹Isabel F. Jones, "Progress Report on Title IX Activities Memo," 29 January 1976, Herbert Wey Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 4.

coaches for women's sports."¹

Jim Jones, Athletic Director, saw things differently. He stated: "A women's field hockey program...is not going to take as much money to operate as for men's football. Therefore, the way that we plan to implement Title IX is to treat women's sports the same as we do our men's so-called 'non-revenue' sports, such as wrestling and track. That is, we take our athletic budget and decide how much financial aid, expenses and so forth it will take to run a successful program in each sport."²

In August 1977 Jeffrey H. Orleans, an administrator with the University of North Carolina system, analyzed ASU's reports on compliance with Title IX. "Unfortunately, the reports do not outline a program that demonstrates allocation of sufficient resources for women for fall term 1978."³

Orleans stated that there needed to be substantial

¹John Lattimore, "Title IX Orders Opportunities for Men, Women," *The Appalachian* 4 November 1975, 5.

²Lattimore, "Title IX Orders Opportunities for Men, Women," 5.

³Jeffrey H. Orleans, "ASU Reports Concerning Future Athletic Opportunities Memo," 24 August 1977, Wey Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

change in the area of athletic financial aid. For the years 1978 to 1980, "...the average award for women will be substantially less than that for men. In light of these differences, I do not think ASU yet projects offering women athletes reasonable opportunities to obtain athletic awards in proportion to their rate of participation."¹

In July 1978, Howe wrote a memo to Jim Jones about compliance with Title IX. "As you know ASU was one of the first--if not the first!--institution in the University of North Carolina system to submit and subsequently receive acceptance of our *Title IX Plan for Athletics* from the General Administration. This was back in November, 1977, when we submitted our Plan."² Howe said that he planned to visit with Jones to discuss the effectiveness of the plan.

Howe suggested that Dr. Judy Clarke be recommended for a promotion. He also suggested that ASU look for a female athletic trainer. "I am not requesting or even implying here that down the road we should have a separate department of athletics for females. I am inquiring, however, into the specific operation of your respective offices, logistical support, decisions on budget and personnel, and other such

¹Orleans, "ASU Reports Memo," 1.

²Richard D. Howe, "Title IX and Athletics Memo," 21 July 1978, Wey Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

matters."¹ Howe also informed Jones of a study to be done on the salaries of female coaches. Howe and the administration did not take a proactive stance in regard to women's equality; they were just worried about complying with federal legislation.

Another outside movement that affected ASU students was the women's rights movement. There were varied reactions to the women's movement on campus. This can be seen by looking at the various reactions to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution. There were articles in the student newspaper that gave the anti-ERA arguments: women would no longer get special treatment, they would be drafted, and there would be unisex bathrooms. There were also articles that supported the ERA. Women should have equal rights with men.

An outside movement that influenced ASU was the National Organization for Women (NOW). Students founded an ASU chapter of NOW in 1975 with June Kight as the first president. The purpose of the organization was to fight discrimination and to help women have an awareness of themselves as people.² NOW was never a big movement on the

¹Howe, "Title IX and Athletics Memo," 2.

²Sheila Mooney, "ASU starts NOW," *The Appalachian* 11 November 1975, 7.

ASU campus in terms of the number of students who joined.

There were three main areas where change occurred for ASU females during the 1970s: extra-curricular activities; curricular activities; and faculty concerns. These changes were mutually reinforcing; faculty concerns often overlapped with student concerns. These three areas were affected by outside influences such as federal legislation and the women's movement. However, these changes were mostly superficial. The women's movement was never very strong on campus, and the administration did just enough to comply with federal legislation, not radically change the way that things were done. Therefore, ASU was behind other national campuses in terms of ensuring equal rights for women.

Like the 1960s, the 1970s was a decade of change for women at ASU. They went from being treated like children to being treated like individual adults. They would continue to gain more rights into the 1980s. They gained more life choices; they did not just go to college to "find a husband." They realized that they could do anything that they wanted, and they wanted to have the same opportunities and same pay as men. They were affected by federal legislation and were influenced by outside movements like the Women's Liberation Movement and NOW. The female faculty members organized to fight against discrimination and were

instrumental in establishing women's studies at ASU.

Appalachian was one of the first schools in North Carolina to have a women's studies course, but lagged slightly behind schools in the North and West. Maggie McFadden said that one of the things that helped the establishment of women's studies at ASU was that Chancellor Wey had already begun educational innovations such as interdisciplinary studies.¹ Chancellor Wey was more open to trying new educational ideas at a time when other administrators were resisting change. This was in addition to the fact that federal law forced changes, students were aware of what was going on in the rest of the country, and new feminist faculty members were hired. All of these added together meant change for women at ASU during the 1970s.

In keeping with the earlier decades, the changes that occurred at ASU were superficial, not deep. Although more changes did occur for ASU women during the 1970s, a "liberation" did not take place. There was no complete overhaul of the male-led hierarchy of the university.

¹Maggie McFadden, Interview by Joanna Yount, 15 November 1996, Tape Recording, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

Chapter Six

Struggle and Backlash

The struggle for equal rights continued into the 1980s, but there was also a backlash against the women's rights movement. There were two different views of the national women's movement during the 1980s. One view, which is typified by Sylvia Ann Hewlett in her book *A Lesser Life*, is that the women's movement actually hurt women. She believes that women were actually better off financially in the 1950s, before the women's movement. With "liberation," divorce became more common and women could no longer count on marriage for financial stability. During the 1960s and 1970s there was a weakening of traditional roles which forced women into the workplace, where they made less money than their male counterparts. "Partly because of the economic fallout of divorce, 77 percent of this nation's poverty is now borne by women and their children."¹ Hewlett

¹Sylvia Ann Hewlett, *A Lesser Life: The Myth of Women's Liberation in America* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1986), 14.

ignored the point that because women have not reached equal status with men, they have not had access to the better paying jobs. Hewlett went on to claim that the women's movement ignored the needs of the majority of American females. It did not address issues such as daycare and maternity leave. Because of this, it alienated the majority of the American public.

Historian Christina Hoff Sommers also believed that some feminists were too radical. Sommers described what she called "gender feminists"- feminists that "believe that all our institutions, from the state to the family to the grade schools, perpetuate male dominance."¹ According to Sommers, they believe that women are under siege, and seek recruits to their side of the gender war by using inaccurate statistics and misinformation to alarm the public. For example, they used a 1992 report by the March of Dimes which specified that domestic violence was the largest cause of birth defects in this country. Sommers did some research and found that the March of Dimes did not know of such a report.²

Sommers believed that these mistruths actually hurt the

¹Christina Hoff Sommers, *Who Stole Feminism? How Women Have Betrayed Women* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 16.

²Sommers, *Who Stole Feminism?*, 13.

women's movement and the women it was trying to help. Their anger and resentment toward males was turning women away from feminism. Sommers believed that "the gender feminists have stolen 'feminism' from a mainstream that had never acknowledged their leadership."¹ Sommers described herself as a feminist who does not like what feminism became under the influence of the "gender feminists." If other feminists criticize gender feminism, then there is the possibility that a more representative form of feminism will develop; one that takes into consideration the views of all women who are struggling for equal rights.

The other view of the women's movement, held by Susan Faludi in her book *Backlash*, is that it did improve the lives of women. Faludi blamed the media and the government for the bad image of the women's movement.

From 'the man shortage' to the 'infertility epidemic' to 'female burnout' to 'toxic day care,' the so-called female crises have had their origins not in the actual conditions of women's lives but rather in a closed system that starts and ends in the media, popular culture, and advertising- an endless feedback loop that perpetuates and exaggerates its own false images of womanhood.²

¹Sommers, *Who Stole Feminism?*, 18.

²Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against American Women* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1991), xv

During the Reagan years, the government pressured U.S. Census demographers to "generate data for the government's war against women's independence."¹ They produced statistics showing the risks of abortion, single parenthood, and day care.

Backlashes such as the one that occurred in the 1980s occurred throughout American history. Faludi described the women's movement as an asymptotic spiral, turning ever nearer to its destination without reaching it. As soon as women seemed to gain some form of equality, a backlash occurred that prevented them from reaching total equality. During a backlash, cultural anxiety centers on women's paycheck and women's fertility. During the 1970s, there was progress in these two areas and this caused the backlash of the 1980s.

According to Faludi, the reason why women had problems was not because of the women's movement, but because women had not reached total equality. This was the case at ASU, women had not reached total equality. Although ASU women made gains during the 1970s and 1980s, these gains were more along the idea of women's rights, not women's liberation. There was no movement to overturn the traditional gender roles.

¹Faludi, *Backlash*, 8.

The Equal Opportunity Office continued to work for ASU women in the 1980s. In the filling of a faculty position, three conditions were to be met: objective screening procedures; internal and external advertisement; and equitable compensation. "It is important that a search committee not only be sensitive to these efforts of affirmative action but that it specifically follow them and document all actions so as to prove good faith in following the spirit as well as the letter of the policies."¹ The applicant pools were to include an appropriate percentage of blacks and women.

In 1983-84, a Title IX Athletic Study was submitted to Chancellor Thomas. This was the second annual athletic study submitted; the first had been submitted on December 13, 1982.

This year's study indicates some slight, but positive, signs of improvement over last year's 'benchmark' study. First, the disproportionality of aid vis-a-vis men vs. women decreased by 4% from last year. Second, the rate of adjusted aid available for men decreased by 1% for men and increased by 1% for women. Third, the percent of total assistance awarded for men remained the same but athletic scholarships for women increased 2% from 1982-83 rates although despite this increase, the total assistance remained the same for both years

¹Richard D. Howe, "Equal Employment Opportunity Memo," 15 October 1980, EEO Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1.

for women because 'other assistance' declined 2%.¹

Howe estimated that at the current rate of improvement, it would take close to another decade to reach total compliance with Title IX.

During the 1980s, the Faculty Concerned With the Status of Women was known as the Organization on the Status of Women (OSW). The OSW was a voluntary faculty organization that was concerned with bettering the position of women at ASU. At a meeting of the Equal Opportunity Task Force in April 1985, OSW member Amy Toms called for "a Women's Center (both academic and administrative) headed up by one person to have the autonomy to work on a specific thing; women's issues, degree programs, women students, advocacy for women, staff, and faculty, and Women's Weeks Programs."² It would be thirteen years before ASU would get a Women's Center; one will be opened during the Fall Semester 1998.

Patricia Beaver made the point that the OSW was an independent organization that worked in the absence of a proactive office working for women's rights. During the

¹Richard D. Howe, "Title IX Athletic Study Memo," 13 June 1984, John E. Thomas Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²"Essence Notes, Equal Opportunity Task Force," 29 April 1985, Thomas Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 2.

late 1980s and early 1990s, administrative offices took over some of the activities that OSW had previously been doing and the organization was not needed as much anymore.¹

Another issue that gained attention during the 1980s was the issue of sexual harassment. In 1985, ASU released a policy prohibiting sexual harassment. It stated: "in compliance with Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the University will not tolerate any verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior which constitutes sexual harassment."² Proven violations of the policy could lead to suspension or termination of the offender.

Also in 1985, a study of sexual harassment at ASU was released by the administration. The *Analysis of Perceived Sexual Harassment of Faculty and Staff at Appalachian State University* report was prepared by the staff of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. The report listed recommendations such as: "Line administrators, particularly deans, directors, and chairpersons should be reminded of their responsibility for implementing the policy and the

¹Patricia Beaver, Interview by author, 23 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²"Appalachian State University Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment," Thomas Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

EEOC's Guidelines and be held accountable for their implementation."¹ The report also called for in-service anti-discrimination training for all employees. Sexual harassment was an issue that gained prominence nationally during the 1980s.

Another concern of female faculty was equal pay. Dr. Joyce Crouch, Chairperson of the Psychology Department, prepared a report comparing male and female salaries at ASU in 1984. Crouch compared ASU faculty salaries to other IIA North Carolina colleges and found that salary differences between the sexes at ASU increased more than at other colleges between the years 1980 and 1983. Crouch offered the following tentative conclusions: "ASU has not made any systematic effort to determine possible sex bias. This failure to focus upon the possibility of sex bias in evaluation at the time of hiring as well as in recommending merit increases has led to a gradual erosion of the position of women faculty."² Again, the administration was not taking a proactive stance on women's issues.

¹*Analysis of Perceived Sexual Harassment of Faculty and Staff at Appalachian State University*, Thomas Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 87.

²Dr. Joyce Crouch, "A Comparison of Male and Female Salaries at Appalachian State University," February 13, 1984, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 2.

Howe came to a different conclusion in a report in 1986. According to a study his office conducted in 1985-86, during the 1985-86 school year, there were thirty-five unequal pay cases and of these, eleven were female and twenty-four were male.

Overall, the data indicate that male faculty, as a group, are paid substantially more than female faculty, as a group. The reason(s) for the differences in salaries of male and female faculty can, in the large majority of cases, be accounted for by differences in overall experience, and/or length of service at ASU, and/or some males may have received higher merit raises than some female faculty.¹

Howe did not mention that female faculty sometimes have the added responsibilities of childbirth and childcare which can adversely affect job performance and merit pay. Therefore, there were reasons why female faculty received less pay that were based solely upon their sex.

The students also pressed for equal rights during the 1980s. In August 1980, Denise Grohs, an ASU student, helped to organize a rally in Boone to help celebrate the anniversary of the nineteenth amendment. She gave the prime reason for organizing the rally as being to promote better awareness for women's rights. The rally was co-sponsored by the Boone chapter of NOW and the League of Women Voters of

¹ASU 1985-86 Equal Pay Study, Thomas Papers, University Archives, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 2.

Boone and "involved about 35 persons, many of whom are ASU students and faculty members."¹ The student newspaper said that the reaction to the rally was "generally enthusiastic."

In January 1981, The Association for Women Students (AWS) was founded by five female students: Dail Bridges; Susan Miller; Lee Beckham; Susan Cain; and Lisa Carswell. According to Bridges, the purpose of the group was "to give students an opportunity to gain awareness and skills needed for full participation in a changing American society and to take action on issues that affect women students."² The group provided education on laws which affected women, and exchanged information with the Boone chapter of NOW. Some thirty people attended AWS's first meeting and discussed women's health on campus. "Through its outreach program, AWS seeks to heighten student awareness of women's issues and to encourage active student support of these concerns."³

In March 1982, ASU held a Women's Week. Well-known feminists Gloria Steinem and Margie Adam Willshare spoke on campus. AWS was influential in organizing the events. An

¹"Women Rally to Celebrate Suffrage," *The Appalachian* 28 August 1980, 1.

²ASU Women's Group Formed," *The Appalachian* 20 January 1981, 5.

³"AWS Brings New Ideas," *The Appalachian* 26 January 1982, 5.

editorial in the school paper stated: "Students should be excited to see such progressive movement on their college campus, and they should be proud that it is here because the students want it here and have taken the initiative to get it."¹

In the 1980s, there was also a backlash against the women's movement at ASU as there was across the country. Several anti-abortion articles appeared in the student newspaper. There were letters to the editor titled: "Equal Rights has Pros and Cons;" and "Women Already Have all the Rights They Need."²

Student Michael Questell stated: "There seems to be a backlash of sorts developing on campus against AWS which I think is unfortunate."³ He went on to say that the Association of Women's Students did not have radical aims. This implied that if AWS had had radical aims, that would have made it unacceptable to some students.

Student Steven Boyd blamed the feminist movement for the failure of ERA to pass. "The ERA failed because it

¹"Women's Week," *The Appalachian* 16 March 1982, 2.

²"Letters to the Editor," *The Appalachian* 10 November 1981, 3.

³Michael Questell, "A Defense of the AWS," *The Appalachian* 26 February 1981, 3.

became associated with a male-hating, dogmatic, radical feminism."¹ He went on to state that he was once a radical and learned about the feminist view of the evil patriarchy. This view alienated both males and females who did not want to enter the man-hating sisterhood. He argued that the ERA acquired a bad name because of the radical feminists' irrational hatred of men.

Student Vennie Thompson also was not a fan of feminists. In a letter to the editor he complained that the word "sexist" was now being used capriciously. He protested against leering and ogling being considered sexual harassment.

In my many years of association with feminists and feminism I have come to the conclusion that there are three kinds of feminists: 1. Lesbian or celibate- Wishes to avoid men entirely. Reverse misogyny. 2. Domineering witch- Likes to be in control. She pays lip service to equality, then demands to be the boss. 3. Pseudo-feminist- Espouses feminism and all that it entails but when encountered by a man who possesses all the qualities she as a feminist deems virtuous...finds him to be a disgusting weakling.²

Thompson named the stereotypes about feminists that were popular at that time. This supports Faludi's argument

¹Steven Boyd, "Feminists Dig Grave," *The Appalachian* 6 April 1982, 3.

²Vennie Thompson, "Impossible to be a 'Real Man' and a Feminist," *The Appalachian* 11 February 1986, 11.

that feminism had a bad name not because of what feminists were doing, but because of the media's portrayal of them.

Student Billy Chandler described what he saw as the bad traits of feminists. They degraded men in their battle for equal rights. "The prevalence of the feminist attitude that women are equal to men has gone from a whimper to a scream; not a right to be earned, but a fact of life. But along with the cry have come those individuals who not only consider themselves 'equal' or even 'superior,' but that men are the scum of the earth."¹ The article expressed strong anger toward feminists.

Michael R. Cooke discussed Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder's (D-CO) decision to drop out of the 1988 Presidential race. News reports quoted statistics that said the biggest opposition to a female president came from women over sixty years of age. "With the possible confirmation of Bork [Robert Bork, popular with the extreme right-wing, was nominated to the Supreme Court] and his notorious stand on women's rights (or lack thereof), rising discrimination, and the failure of equal pay legislation, there is evidence of a trend away from equality."² This was Faludi's point, women

¹Billy Chandler, "Feminists are as Bad as the Men They Hate," *The Appalachian* 13 February 1986, 4.

²Michael R. Cooke, "Women: Back to the Kitchen?," *The Appalachian* 6 October 1987, 8.

were having problems because they had not achieved equality, not because of feminism.

In 1987, Al Haman argued that the ERA was not needed. The Constitution was not a sexist document, it did not prohibit women from having the same rights as men. Haman argued that all male pronouns were meant to be generic pronouns. "So, in response to those who want the ERA, I ask: If you've got equal rights nailed down already, what's all that you want around it?"¹ Women did not have equal rights, which was shown by the fact that men were consistently paid more than women for doing the same job.

There was a backlash nationally against the women's movement. In 1984, the Supreme Court limited enforcement of Title IX. It ruled that Grove City College did not have to prove that all of its departments complied with Title IX just because some of its students received federal aid. "Nationally, some observers worry the decision may leave some new women's programs vulnerable to administrators' apathy, and make it harder to overturn programs that continue to discriminate."² The ruling especially affected female sports, administrators no longer had to worry about

¹Al Haman, "ERA: The Redundant Amendment," *The Appalachian* 22 October 1987, 14.

²"Supreme Court Limits Title IX Enforcement to Campus Officers," *The Appalachian* 22 March 1984, 1.

complying with Title IX if that department did not receive federal aid.

In September 1985 there was a debate on the ASU campus between Phyllis Schlafly, president of the conservative Eagle Forum, and Sarah Weddington, who successfully argued *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court case which legalized abortion. They discussed controversial issues such as the ERA, nuclear weapons, Reaganomics, and abortion. Three groups provided the audience with information prior to the debate: Watauga County Right to Life; Boone Area National Organization for Women; and the ASU Association for Women Students.¹ The students received the speakers well and debated the issues amongst themselves after the debate.

The backlash against the women's movement was especially strong in the South. Many of the former Confederate states did not ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. There were several explanations for this: there were more Protestant fundamentalists in the South; more southerners were traditionalists; and southerners tended to be suspicious of federal intervention. There was also the racial issue: "Court-enforced sexual equality, like racial equality, many Southerners believed, would further diminish

¹"Weddington and Schlafly Draw Reactions," *The Appalachian* 26 September 1985, 5.

the power of state and local governments and the right of individuals to live as they chose."¹ Since ASU was a southern school, these dynamics also came into play at the university.

Christina Hoff Sommers argued against the idea of the occurrence of a backlash against the women's movement. Sommers characterized gender feminism as victim feminism, women were seen as victims of male oppression. They denigrate the women who respect the men who they wage war on. "When feminists talk of a new society and of how people must be changed, they invariably have in mind men who exploit and abuse women. But it is not difficult to see that they regard most women as men's dupes."²

Sommers did not address the question of why women's struggle for equal rights seems to go in fits and starts. Faludi did a good job of doing this by characterizing the women's movement as a tilted corkscrew; when women seem to gain more rights, there is a backlash against them. Females at Appalachian State University experienced a backlash during the 1980s.

¹Jane Sherron De Hart, "Second Wave Feminism(s) and the South: The Difference that Differences Make," in *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader*, Christie Anne Farnham, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 280.

²Sommers, *Who Stole Feminism?*, 258.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion

A debate among feminist scholars that applies to the history of female students at ASU is the view of women as oppressed versus the view of women as active agents. The view of women as oppressed is the belief that historically women have been passive recipients of oppression by the male-dominated society. The view of women as active agents holds that women were not just victims of male society, but were active participants in that society. Feminist historians such as Gerda Lerner have turned from the view of women as oppressed and toward the view of women as active agents. Lerner believes that the view of women as oppressed produces "contribution history," whereby women are seen as just contributing to history, not shaping it.¹

Feminist historians are concerned with capturing the consciousness of past women. "This concern with historical women's consciousness is consistent with the emphasis on activity rather than oppression; it is a reaction against the assumption that male stereotypes and norms for womanly

¹Lerner, "Placing Women in History," 5-14.

behavior determine women's sense of themselves."¹ Feminists criticize the view of women as oppressed because it assumes that the image of ideal womanhood was passively absorbed by the majority of women.

Feminist scholars are examining women's clubs and organizations in order to better understand the ways in which women tried to change their world. The "ideas and perspectives that were initially attributed to an oppressive 'cult of true womanhood' have largely been reinterpreted by feminist historians in terms of a rich and empowering culture of women."² This women's culture is separate and distinct from the male culture.

The view of women as active agents gives a more positive view than the view of women as oppressed. It also allows the reassessment of the value we place on private and domestic life. "By positing the fullness of women's lives, their independent bases of power, their distinct cultures and separate traditions of artistic expression, feminist scholars are able to offer both a description of women's activities and an explanation for how they could have been

¹Ellen Carol DuBois et al, *Feminist Scholarship* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 55.

²DuBois et al, *Feminist Scholarship*, 56-57.

overlooked so long."¹ They were overlooked for so long because historians placed little value on women's activities.

Victoria E. Bynum believed that women in the American South were active agents in history. In *Unruly Women*, she described three categories of unruly women in the antebellum and Civil War South: women who complained about males who abused their power; women who engaged in social and sexual misbehavior; and women who defied male authority. Bynum "places unruly women at center stage by showing how they struggled to carve out a space for themselves in a society that condemned and marginalized them."² She did this by broadening the concept of power to include not only the people who wield power, but also the people who respond to it. For ASU, this means looking at both the administration and the students who reacted to the administration's power.

Viewing women as active agents does not mean that they were the cause of their own oppression. "Many studies of socially and politically marginalized people offer fresh insights into how societies create and maintain power and

¹DuBois et al, *Feminist Scholarship*, 66.

²Victoria E. Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 2.

how marginalized people resist that power."¹ One way that power is maintained is through keeping the marginalized ignorant. Therefore the powerless can change that power by educating and asserting themselves. For example, Appalachian students resisted the strict dormitory rules by writing petitions and editorials for the school paper, and they succeeded in getting the rules changed.

Anne Firor Scott also saw southern women as active agents in history. In *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics*, Scott analyzed the activities of southern women from 1830 to 1930. She found that women were active and effective in the political arena during this time period. "Time after time records of political reform movements revealed the presence of a woman or of a group of women who had played a significant role, and this before women were enfranchised."² Scott found that the southern woman's image was at odds with the reality of her life.

Nancy Cott, in *The Bonds of Womanhood*, also described women as active agents, although she concentrated on New England women in the years 1780 to 1835. She looked at women's personal documents in the years before 1830 to try to understand the origins of the "cult of true womanhood".

¹Bynum, *Unruly Women*, 3.

²Scott, *The Southern Lady*, ix.

The "cult of true womanhood" was similar to the domesticity of the 1950s; women's primary roles were seen to be that of wife and mother. Cott "assumed all along that women were neither victims of change- passive receivers of changing definitions of themselves- nor totally mistresses of their destinies."¹ She did not see women as totally oppressed or as totally active agents. Women were influenced by the male-biased society. Women followed male-defined political laws and social rules. Some women reacted against these rules by organizing to fight for more rights, for example in the suffrage movement.

Most later feminist historians have seen women more as active agents rather than as oppressed. Women had a significant role to play in history and were not passive non-players. Women were oppressed in the past, but they reacted against this oppression and worked to change it. Female students at Appalachian State University were active agents in the struggle of students to gain more rights. They were not just passive recipients of oppression by the administration, especially during the 1960s, '70s and '80s.

The struggle to ensure equal rights for ASU females continues to the present day. There are three areas where

¹Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds on Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780- 1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 4.

changes continue to occur for ASU females: curricular activities, extra-curricular activities, and faculty concerns. One area that has undergone changes during the 1990s is the Women's Studies Program. ASU's Women's Studies program is the second oldest program in the state of North Carolina; it was begun in 1976. A 1998 brochure from The Office of Women's Studies declares:

Originally designed to remedy the omission of the study of women in the university curriculum, we continue today to work towards that goal. To that end, the Women's Studies program offers: a new approach to traditional academic disciplines by incorporating the study and contributions of women; an interdisciplinary model of scholarship constructed around women's issues, gender and feminist/womanist theory; a variety of opportunities...for student, faculty and staff development in the study of women and gender; and an open atmosphere for the exchange of ideas and expression of concern over a wide range of women's issues on our campus and in our society.¹

In the 1990s, ASU students could earn a B.A. in Interdisciplinary Studies with a concentration in Women's Studies. ASU also offered an undergraduate minor in Women's Studies. There were approximately fifty students who were in these programs during the 1997-98 school year, and approximately 250 students in the fall and 450 in the spring

¹"Women's Studies at Appalachian State University," Brochure from The Office of Women's Studies, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 1998.

were enrolled in women's studies courses.¹

In 1996, the Equity Office assumed the responsibility of the non-academic concerns with which the Women's Studies office had been involved (sexual harassment, sexual discrimination). The Women's Studies program then focused on the academic program and supplementary programs such as films and lectures. In February and March of 1998, the Women's Studies Program co-sponsored a series of films to celebrate Women's History Month. Approximately 620 people saw this film series over a five week period.²

Dr. Sandra Gravett became Director of Women's Studies in July of 1997. She gave several goals for the Women's Studies Program in the future. The program should be available to more students; it should be more of a university-wide program. The Women's Studies Program is currently part of the College of Arts and Sciences and Gravett would like to see inroads into other colleges. She hopes to see better coordination of all services for women; currently some offices are working at cross-purposes and are not effectively pooling their resources. There is a need for better funding: both inside and outside funding sources

¹Sandra Gravett, Interview with author, 25 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Sandra Gravett, Interview with author, 25 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

needs to be increased. ASU needs to get more women's studies classes into the curriculum and needs to offer more workshops that teach faculty to incorporate gender studies into their own disciplines. Gravett would like to see the Women's Studies program become a more comprehensive and integrated program. She plans on finding better funding and holding workshops to teach faculty to incorporate gender into their own disciplines.¹

Dr. Maggie McFadden also discussed the needs of the women's studies program at ASU. The program does not receive enough financial support: the director only gets a quarter time release and there is only a graduate assistant and work-study student to help the director. The position comes with a lot of responsibility; the director has to deal with many different departments. In comparison, the director of women's studies at UNC-Asheville, a smaller school, gets more released time than the ASU director. McFadden would like to see funding and support for visiting professors on gender-related issues. It would also be beneficial if ASU were able to hire someone who could teach women's studies full-time. Younger women's studies programs in North Carolina have faculty positions in women's

¹Sandra Gravett, Interview by author, 23 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

studies.¹ ASU has faculty that are hired to teach their primary subjects and then teach women's studies on the side.

ASU has a tradition of women's studies, thanks to the efforts of some members of the faculty. Women's studies needed to be incorporated throughout the different colleges of the university. Efforts need to be made to ensure that the women's program continues into the future. All parts of the university need to understand the importance of the study of gender and need to incorporate it into their disciplines. ASU needs to reach the position where a separate women's studies department would not be needed because it would already be fully incorporated into the rest of the curriculum. McFadden asserted that many feminists do not see the incorporation of women's studies into the curriculum happening anytime in the near future. But it is a goal toward which ASU should work. There needs to be general understanding of the importance of the study of gender before this will happen.

Another area where change continues to occur for ASU females is faculty issues. The administrative position of Assistant to the Provost for Women's Concerns was created in the 1990s and acts as an intermediary between the Provost

¹Maggie McFadden, Interview by author, 25 March 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

and ASU women. This post was created, in part, because of pressure by some women on campus who were worried about the administration's seeming lack of concern over women's issues. In an interview in 1998, Dr. Thalia Coleman, current Assistant to the Provost for Women's Concerns, discussed the responsibilities of her position. She is available for women to come to her with their problems and she seeks out women to see what issues are important to them. She reports these issues to the Provost and channels people who have problems to the people who can help them. She works closely with the Equity Office.¹

Coleman has found varying concerns among ASU women. One of the concerns is the lack of women in higher positions at ASU; in 1998 there is one female Dean and one female Vice Chancellor. ASU has had a difficult time attracting qualified women due to two main deficiencies, childcare and husband/partner jobs. The lack of qualified childcare, especially for infants, makes it hard to retain female faculty. There are plans to expand the Child Development Center but even that will probably not be enough. The location and size of Boone create another problem, lack of jobs for spouses and partners. Boone is not, nor is it

¹Thalia Coleman, Interview by author, 16 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

located near, a major center of commerce. This means that many women faculty have to make choices between their relationships and their careers. For ASU this means high turnover and the loss of qualified women faculty. Coleman cited several things that ASU can do to help alleviate these problems, for example forming collaborative efforts with businesses to keep abreast of positions available in the area and providing more and better childcare.¹

One of the problems that the lower numbers of female faculty causes is that women students who want to seek out female professors to discuss problems put more demands upon the time of the female professors. This can be very time-consuming and constitutes invisible teaching duties that many male professors do not have. According to Coleman, this can cause women to be passed over for tenure and promotion because they cannot do as much research and writing as they would otherwise. Many universities still take research and writing into consideration when making tenure decisions. This extra- curricular counseling is in addition to the added family responsibilities that married faculty have.²

¹Thalia Coleman, Interview by author, 16 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Thalia Coleman, Interview by author, 16 April 1998, Appalacian State University, Boone, NC.

The third area where changes continue to occur is extra-curricular activities. An area that will affect ASU female students in the future is the new Women's Center that the administration plans on opening in the Fall of 1998. In an interview in April 1998, Dr. Lee Williams discussed the efforts to begin a Women's Center. It will be located in the Student Union and its mission reads as follows:

The Women's Center seeks to enhance awareness of the challenges facing women on this campus and in this society, and to promote, support, and celebrate the diverse Appalachian State University women's community. We will strive to foster an environment that creates opportunities for the education, leadership development and personal growth of women, regardless of their background or beliefs. The Women's Center will contribute to the ASU community by offering its own programs and services, collaborating with all existing entities and by working to transform discriminatory institutional structures and practices.¹

The administration asked Williams to oversee the planning on a Women's Center during the 1996-97 school year. A group of women on campus was dissatisfied with the way the administration was handling some alleged sexual assaults that occurred that year. Part of the complaints of these women to the administration was that there was no Women's

¹Lee Williams, Interview by author, 8 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

Center on campus. The administration had been resistant to a Women's Center because they feared that it would only be used by such groups as NOW. According to Williams, some administrators also feared that the Women's Center would give feminists a playground from which they could launch their "radical" agenda. Williams had a different take on what a Women's Center could be; she saw it as being more inclusive. She had seen how Women's Centers on other campuses were marginalized because they were seen as too exclusive.¹

During the 1996-97 school year, Williams put together a Women's Center planning committee of approximately thirty students, faculty, and staff. There were representatives from such diverse groups as NOW, BE-GLAAD (a gay organization), the Panhellenic Council (which governs fraternities and sororities), Women's Studies, and Christian and Jewish groups. The committee met seven times during the Spring Semester in 1997 and shaped a proposal for the Women's Center that Williams then wrote and submitted to Dr. Gregory Blimling, Vice Chancellor for Student Development. Blimling suggested several revisions, one of which was to omit the mission statement from the proposal. He objected

¹Lee Williams, Interview by author, 8 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

to the last sentence of the statement which stated that the Women's Center would work to "transform discriminatory institutional structures and practices."¹ According to Dr. Blimling, discriminatory institutional structures do not exist at ASU. The mission statement was omitted and the proposal was submitted to Chancellor Francis Borkowski and was approved. The planning committee included the mission statement in brochures on the proposed Women's Center.

The administration wanted the Women's Center to be a student organization; therefore, there will be no faculty staff member. Williams is the faculty advisor to the Women's Center and would like the Center to encourage student leadership development. The Center currently has a comparatively small budget, \$6,000 to \$8,000, which is to cover volunteer training, office expenses, and acquiring a library.² The planning committee activity diminished after the proposal for the center was approved. Williams needs forty student volunteers by the end of Spring Semester 1998; if she does not get them then the Women's Center will not be able to open in the Fall of 1998. If this center is not successful now, it will be harder for future female students

¹Lee Williams, Interview by author, 8 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²Lee Williams, Interview by author, 8 April, 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

to get one. The administration has put the burden of maintaining the center on the students' shoulders and they need to prove student interest.¹

Women at ASU have been and continue to be active agents in the struggle of women to gain more rights. They actively participated in the struggle against *in loco parentis* that occurred during the 1960s and continued to struggle for more rights in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. They pushed for changes that would improve their campus life but not lead to a total overhaul of the system. The result of the changes that occurred for women during these decades has not been a total "liberation" for women at ASU. There are still things that need to be improved, such as more women faculty and more women in higher administrative positions. During the 1997-98 school year, sixty-six percent of the full-time faculty were male, while thirty-four percent were female.²

A dichotomy which exists in women's studies is the struggle for women's rights versus the struggle for women's liberation. Historians have labeled the feminists who fought for women's rights "social feminists," and the ones

¹Lee Williams, Interview by author, 8 April 1998, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC.

²*Appalachian State University Annual Fact Book* (Boone: Appalachian State University, 1998), 85.

who fought for total sexual equality "hard-core feminists."¹ The "social feminists" emphasized personal freedom which appealed to career women more than it did to factory women. "The two classes thus had distinctly opposite economic interests, but feminists refused to acknowledge the difference and instead attempted to impose their own point of view on all women."² By the 1920s, women's groups were polarized, especially over the Equal Rights Amendment which "social feminists" fought against because they felt that it would hurt legislation meant to protect women. This division would continue into the 1970s when one of the groups fighting the ERA's ratification was women who were afraid that the ERA would hurt protective legislation for women.

Female students at Appalachian State University fought mostly for women's rights, not women's liberation. There was never a big women's liberation movement at ASU as there was on other college campuses due to the historically conservative nature of the ASU student body. This conservativeness was due in part to the homogeneous nature of the student body; the students were mostly white and

¹William L. O'Neill, *Everyone was Brave: A History of Feminism in America* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), x.

²Chafe, *The Paradox of Change*, 56.

Protestant which meant that they were less exposed to different cultures and different ideas. Female students did not question the male-defined framework, but worked for small changes within that framework. This meant that the improvements that were made in women's status were superficial, not deep. The female students requested a lessening of dormitory rules, but not a voice in the governing of the university. In the 1990s, there have been a few voices calling for radical change, but the vast majority of students and faculty do not want to change the status quo. They do not feel a need for radical change, sufficient equality has been achieved.

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